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# HAPPINESS FROM THOUGHTS

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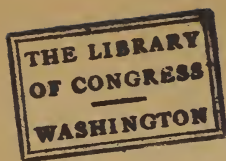
## SERMONS

—BY—

✓  
JAMES VILA BLAKE



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## CONTENTS

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|                                                        | Page. |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Peace, .. .. .                                         | 1     |
| Authority, .. .. .                                     | 15    |
| The Earth's Friendliness, .. .. .                      | 33    |
| Forgiveness, .. .. .                                   | 49    |
| Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion, .. .. . | 93    |
| The Natural Man, .. .. .                               | 111   |
| Burden Bearing, .. .. .                                | 121   |
| A Happy New Year, .. .. .                              | 149   |
| The Undertone of Life, .. .. .                         | 171   |
| Losses, .. .. .                                        | 187   |
| Religion and the Bible, .. .. .                        | 197   |
| Happiness from Thoughts, .. .. .                       | 253   |
| Perhaps, .. .. .                                       | 269   |
| Appendix, .. .. .                                      | 283   |



Gratefully, Affectionately,

This Book is inscribed to

JAMES M. WANZER,

for Twenty Years Trustee of the Pulpit in which these  
Sermons were spoken.

His is the noble Simplicity of Motive which  
is Truth, the tender faithfulness of  
Heart which is Strength.





## PEACE.

---

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."—Matthew xi. 28.

These are gracious words. They fall like rain on the mown field, bringing again to life the roots of feeling and of conduct that the hot sun of care has parched. "Come," says Jesus, "with your laboring and heavy laden souls, and I will give you rest; for I will show you that religion is not to do this act or that, in this way or in another; but to live justly and mercifully, and with humble devoutness; and this every man can do in his own soul. This only is my yoke, to be meek and lowly of heart; which is an easy yoke and a light burden because truly it is in accordance with the nature of the soul." Now this you see sets peace in the state of the mind and not in any outward doings or fortunes. Now peace is the blessing the world calls for. Do not you wish peace? Has not Heaven always been thought of as a rest? Herbert says that "weariness shall toss us to the breast" of our Father. Who of you is not tired often? Who of you wages not a strife which sometimes is exhausting? To be at peace, to have a quiet mind,—this always has been a great need, and sought anxiously.

I will ask you to take a near view of this rest to which Jesus calls the laboring and heavy laden, for if rest (as the world thinks) be something to be courted by greatness and power, lying softly on the pillow of the taskmaster but scouting the cabin of the slave, what is Jesus' invitation worth, who had not "where to lay his head?"

Now many have searched for peace by going away from the world into a corner of a wilderness, of a desert, or of some cold stone house, or into a cell, or a clois-

ter; they have believed peace dwelt in silence and in solitude. Democritus, it is said, put out his eyes that the better he might retire to contemplation. This way to find peace has been the inspiration of some great religions; of Buddhism, for instance, even more than of Christianity; yet of Christianity much and often. Jerome exclaims: "What do you, Brother, in secular life, who art greater than the world? How long shall the shadows of roofs oppress you? How long shall the prison-house of smoky cities enclose you? Believe me, I know not how much more light I gaze upon. It is well, having cast off the burden of the body, to fly off to the pure effulgence of the sky." But I think not this was Jesus' religion, nor would he have thought that mere stillness and passiveness, even though with meditation, was the greatest and noblest peace, or mayhap even at all to be called peace—as not hating is far from the same as loving. It is nobler, very much nobler, to live with men, yes, to strive with them, and to wrestle with the earth, with great business, with legions of cares, and yet to have a peace not to be overthrown. Now I preach that this can be; nay, that it can be easily. I will not yield that it is a hard thing to have peace of mind; nay, I care not what be the struggles, the cares, the privations, the pains, still I yield not that peace is hard. Sometimes I think that morality and religion are things so very great and strong, that even to have a little of them is to have tremendous power; and in this way I explain some great things done in the world while yet there is such evil too, and the great heights to which even the very faulty climb when need is. For either they have much greater virtue than appears to men's eyes, or else a little goes very far. Therefore I say, it is possible to live in what whirl soever of hard work, of cares, of strained strength, yea, even though unrequited, and still have an abounding peace; of which it hath been said truly, that it passeth understanding; and also it passeth all delights.

Yet let me not be thought to overlook the hard conditions of the world, or to weigh them lightly, or not to know how hard they press, and sometimes with what keen edge they cut; yea, often with what cruel jaws tear the heart. Terrible toils, sad tumults, mournful miseries, hard times, throng everywhere, or trip like demons to a "dance of

death." Often when I walk the street, I busy myself in looking at faces inquiringly, and whenever so I do, I am struck, in the long avenues of moving ranks of people, with the few happy faces that I see, all having a prepossession of some care, toil, question, or pain to which they are going. Has it always been so? I know not how to think otherwise.

Nature is not lavish at man's wish. He must extort from her. She bestows not. All that he gains he wrests by toil. The necessity on him to work knows no times or seasons nor is ever eased. There have been periods named after many objects of human pursuit—ages of art, of science, of religion, of philosophy, of war, conquest, empire; but there has never been an age marked above others as a working age, nor any time when man has not toiled in order to live. Yet this time of ours is marked by a feverish anxiety and haste of labor which is a very striking feature in it to historical observers. In a volume called "Human Sadness" one chapter is entitled "Weariness." The writer thinks that our age, unhappily, is distinguished by the excessive toil in the outward of which I have been speaking. Machinery and commerce, the telegraph, railroads, and republicanism goad us to dreadful exertions and wear us out when we ought to be in the youth of fresh and hearty vigor. De Tocqueville, in describing our age, speaks of "a senile consumption that one can define in no other way than as a *diffic lty in living*."

Toil is implanted even in our mere physical being. Countless forces unite in active hostility to man. Nature seems pitted against him. Hosts watch their chance to destroy him. Such as serve him he has enslaved with hard struggles. A physician said to me: "It is commonly averred that disease is the struggle of the body to throw off the deadly matter that obstructs and poisons it. If disease can be averted, it is said, we live calmly, without effort. But the truth is contrariwise; not disease, but *life* is the struggle. Disease is the victory of inimical forces over life. We have to struggle for our first breath, drawing it not without pain; whereupon vitality begins at once a life-long struggle with destructive poisons floating free and active in the atmosphere inhaled at every breath. The dew attacks us, and cold and damps, the heat of summer, imperceptible drafts, insidious miasma. Noxious substances mingle with our bread.

The very processes of life evolve products inimical to it. The struggle of the organic and inorganic kingdoms is long and terrible, but the latter surely gains the victory as old age comes on apace. At last it brings us to dissolution. Thus, in the body, struggle is life. Death has the prestige, life prevails hardly, and when we cease to struggle, we die."

So in the province of the will, the word is, *toil*, for ever. All objects exact it, some more, some less, but the value of each is appraised by the toil it costs. Outward objects, wealth, ornament, reputation, require the least effort, though often even these elude the utmost industry. But they are the lowest objects of pursuit, sometimes the brood of accident. A man may pick up a fortune in a pearl on the sea shore.

Next in value is intellectual power, a trained and patient mind, treasures of learning, rewards of science, achievements of art, vigor, thought. These, albeit there are differences of endowment, parley not with idleness; they yield only to unremitting labor.

Last, and most valuable, is great character, moral excellence. Here is toil indeed, resolution, watching. There are great wars to be waged with ourselves. Who are exempted by happy endowment? Morality levels everywhere. On the whole I think men are more nearly equal in moral quality than we see. Do you, of an inert and indolent disposition, envy my active temperament? It is as hard for me to curb my violence to quietness as for you to lift your apathy to enthusiasm. We have all our especial stubborn difficulties, and lurking snares of passion, prejudice, appetite, indolence, avarice. Character comes by slow conquest, with many moments of fainting, failure, bitter doubt. The moral nature, like the physical, is placed here in an atmosphere which can support life only by being purged of its burden of matter hostile to vitality. And this must be accomplished by the vitality of the moral nature itself. We must breathe in the evil for the sake of the good, and then wrestle till we dislodge the ill part. Shall we think to travel with careless, easy footsteps in his path who was perfected through suffering? "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" We have

each some stubborn, besetting sin, tempters without, snares within, passion, prejudice, injustice, appetite, avarice and all forms of selfishness. A pure and sterling character is no easy acquirement, but the slow gain of sore struggle. If we cease the struggle, it is the death of faith in good and in God.

But the struggle for intellectual and moral gain has its cheering side. Though the strife be severe, the reward is priceless, "spiritual and eternal" Headlong toil would defeat itself if its object were of the mind; for the mind can grow only by quiet and peace. But how men toil for bread to eat and for common shelter! how they delve for station, for power, for pleasure, for plunder, patronage, revenge!

The magnificence and wealth of a metropolis, hospitable harbors, prolific enterprises, immense machinery to support congregated life, are objects of pride to a nation. But I never visit a sadder place than our vast sea-board city of New York. Such is the toil that every face which is not worn or anxious, is thoughtless. The city is builded by the labor of hungry men and grew rich by the sweat of African slaves. There is no single instant in which the vast swarm rests. Before light begins honest labor, treading on night crafts, honest ones, and shameless. The crowded and suffering poor, always by a strange law most crowded and suffering most where wealth most abounds, seize a rainy day to send their little children into the cold, pitiless streets. Scattered in pairs or more at every corner, they stand all day in the rain with bare feet and thin, soaked garments, striving, with a broken broom, to sweep the cross-walks clean from the running filth, for proud feet that are not bare, and begging a penny from each cross and hasty passer for the convenience which has cost so much toil and cold, so many rebuffs. Their little hands scarce seem able to hold more than the filth in them, and their beseeching faces are so plastered with earth that it seems as if a cleansing flood of tears must be the forerunner of a smile. And these children, if they survive, in most cases may expect no lighter toil nor better fare.

Nor is his toil less who slaves in the scrutiny of investments for accumulation; nor his less whose possessions hang every day on the capricious chances of a fictitious market; nor, in all the wrong and wrangle, is his less who schemes



and labors in humane causes. All is one tumult of perpetual struggle, from the scheming of avarice and the cares of honorable office to the fight for bare subsistence.

But Jesus calls not only to the laboring but the heavy laden. There are many who have heavy burdens. It may be that their burden is that they cannot labor. Illness, accident, overstrain in hard work when they could labor, have cast them aside. They must endure dependence, weakness. They bewail a seeming uselessness. Others are in painful positions; they are full of force and heart-leaping with purposes and with plans, but cramped, imprisoned, chained. Others work constantly but seem to reap naught from it. They are frustrated, swallowed up in losses. Others gain a little, yet very little, day by day, and always are pinched. Others toil faithfully and serve exceedingly, but win no requital, no love, no smiles and blessings, no infoldings, no gratefulness. All these cry out for rest, peace.

And yet with all this struggle, strife, toil, pain, I say we may have peace and rest. Whatever the strife, whether mean or great, sure it is that we cannot know the earth we live in, its place in the firmament of stars or its peoples' place in the heaven of souls, till we have peace within. Again I say, nor can say it too earnestly, nor too often, nor often enough till all have believed it, that this peace may be in us, fastened under all disturbance whatever,—the quietness on which the waves of the surface roll. For as the waves reach into the water but a little way down, and there is a depth which the hurricane cannot tear into, and as again the waves when they break in foam and spray are dissolved in the heights of the atmosphere, which still is as clear as it was before and is not troubled, so I think there is a depth under and over our troubles, our strifes, our pains; and that depth is the peace of God wherein we move and have being.

The Scriptures say that this peace passeth understanding. This is because it is beyond all reach and harm, and we know not how to conceive that which nothing can lay hold of, which, like the sea depths and the heavens, is both under and over all storms but never torn by them. This peace is never apathy; nay, it is never deep and whole but with great feeling and a quick heart. It is a pure serene faith, a devout trust, and brave obedience; for these qualities have the peace of Providence,

because they join themselves with Providence. They will work very hard, mayhap, to make things thus or so, as the heart may wish them, or the desires point; but they will not cry aloud that this *must* be thus or so, or beat their breasts, groan and complain, if things be otherwise; but after we have labored according to our understanding, and to our foresight, as best we may judge, to make things so, then if they turn otherwise, these qualities, faith, trust, obedience, take the things as they are, and turn their labor to our own souls, that we may conform ourselves to the things; and when we have done this, it is peace; and this always we may do.

Our home is in our own souls, in the sphere of spiritual life, which is not here or there, but everywhere. Here we *exist* for the time being, but we *live* in that which has no here nor there, nor any bonds of space. That we may not be satisfied to have our life and treasure here in these things which are but the present confined sphere of spiritual activity, that we may not remain at ease with material and lower values, we are made restless by vast desires. These at last become infinite thoughts and reach out. They roam the heavens like stars. "Human nature is one great want," says the moralist. This want is not in itself unrest. If the will be trained and the soul growing, this want is inspiration, a divine striving to greater being, a consciousness of strength beyond all present deeds, a sense of life and power in the soul. So it is when our wants are directed to their native objects, to spiritual things, to duty, greatness, beauty, experience of God. But if this imperious want, which our nature is, waste itself in the outward and the perishable, then it is terrible unrest; then we wander like exiles, exiled in sight of home. For of these outward things there will be always more to long for than to gain; and what we have gained will perish in the using, or only hang round us like a chain, if we hoard it. Seeing that we must want, we shall have no rest unless we want what we were made to gain in increasing measures, and then to keep forever.

It is noticeable that great and holy men, however driven and pursued, oppressed, hurt, speak of an unvanquished peace which they have. Jesus told his disciples that when they were dragged before the Court, they should take no thought

what they should say, for it should be given them in that same hour what they should say. This was a command out of a great peace of soul. It is related that Socrates did the like, taking no thought of his defense before the dikasts, because the voice that attended him bade him not do it; and it is plain that he had great peace of mind in the trial, and before it, and after it. Again Jesus said, "My peace I give unto you;" and according to the record he was then in the very jaws of the horrors that closed upon him. Yet his peace was the same, and worthy to be left to his friends, as something far in the heart and out of all reach; for he said "Not as the world giveth, give I unto you." And again he said, "Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Little of outward things had Jesus to draw peace from. It is shown in the gospels that he recoiled painfully from the fate awaiting him; yet, in the very shadow of it, he said "My peace I give unto you."

I think this impregnable peace springs from two sources:

First, from duty faithfully done. We cannot draw too large the restfulness that flows from a mind at peace with itself in the quiet of conscience. Right and wrong are so. Who can be moved by shifting tumults if fixed on the immutable? This is true freedom, for it is obedience to God. Freedom always is peace. In a Jewish writer of the Middle Ages, it is narrated that Moses said to God, "Lord of the whole earth, thou hast laid two yokes on thy children, the yoke of the law and the yoke of the kings." God answered, "Whoever attends to the law shall be free from the yoke of the kings."

It is not required that we should do, but that only we should try to do. This was the light yoke of Jesus. Inward earnestness, truly a light yoke—that only we should try, which anyone can do. Yet this sincere effort in the soul is immovable peace.

The rest which flows from a mind quiet and at peace with itself, a conscience satisfied with duty done, is the same in nature as the "Peace of God, which passeth understanding."

It is a fixed star by which we sail; and as is the blessed sight of that star to the half-wrecked ship, scudding in the black



night, the compass lost, so to the soul torn with temptations, is the guidance of the pole-star of duty, "of whose true fixed and resting quality there is no fellow in the firmament."

Duty is like a high hill. When we have gone up it, we are in a perfect and pure air, where all is life and quiet. The ills, turmoil, noise and terrors of earth are below us. A martyr of the early church said loftily to the Pagan persecutors, "Do you reckon, then, that to us and to you evils are equally evil? Do you not know from your own observation that you and we bear not afflictions in the same way? \* \* \* Among us, hope then flourishes in its full vigor, and faith loses nothing of its confidence! Our mind stands erect and our virtue is unshaken, amid the ruins of a falling world!"

Is not power peace? Is not the sense of strength great rest? Is not he quiet in mind and spirit, serene, unmoved, unhurried, full of dignity, who knows that he hath abundant strength for the next task? This is rest that comes of duty, namely, that again there is strength for requirement; for well said it is that "the reward of one duty is the power to fulfill another."

Is not knowledge rest? Behold with what quiet constancy the knowing stand. See how peacefully a man fronts anything he understands. Observe the poise of a man with what is reasonable. Consider the confidence of a man with what he masters and knows. Remark how free of fear he is, how manly, sufficient, erect, strong. But what teaches like Duty? What lies under knowledge but Duty? What gives insight, builds wisdom, shows the way, reveals wonders, reasons justly, beholds things as they are and in their true order, like Duty. "Every duty we omit," says Ruskin, "obscures some truth we should have known." Simple dutifulness gives us the rest, the security, of stored knowledge.

Surely it is a source of rest, of impregnable rest, that we have a leader. Let us be as bold as we will, as free as we wish, still it is rest and peace to meet a wiser person than ourselves and feel a power sustaining us, our perplexities begirt with assurance, our foggy path sunlighted. Such rest comes of Duty. For we follow Duty, not lead. Duties choose us, not we them. They come to us, commissioned. "Can man or woman choose

duties?" says George Eliot; "No more than they can choose their birth-place, or their father and mother." 'Tis a great rest that this gives us—the rest of reliance and the peace of a mighty loyalty which follows, obeys and loves.

Is it not rest to be free from cares and terrors and ambitions about the issues of things? If one build a great house, is he not at rest if the building of it so rejoice and fill him that he heeds not what may be said of it and reckons up no other success in his thoughts? If a writer compose a work, if a poet sing, an artist design or paint or model or make music, and he never runs after great payment for it nor courts admiration nor hurries attention nor is concerned about the fate of it, is not this rest, peace? Is not the quiet of such a mind in its work like healthful sleep after labor? Such rest comes of Duty; for Duty is all and whole in this moment, as Divinity is, and looks not beyond. This is contentment, peace, immovableness. I care not how severe the strain and the labor, whoso takes it in this pure way and childlike spirit finds rest in duty. Fenelon indicates that if we be content with doing calmly what depends on us and is in our path, though it be little, "we shall have the mind to let all else be to us as if it were naught." "If," says Confucius, "doing what ought to be done be made the first business, and success a secondary matter,—is not this the way to exalt virtue?" Yes, and the way to be taken with virtue into a high space which is above the quakes of the earth.

How much restlessness, anxiety and painful beating against the bars, does faithfulness escape, having a mind free from "disorders of passion," from anguish of remorse, from sins of darkness, confusion, vexation, that "dishonor our nature, deform our soul, ruffle our mind, and rack our conscience!" Instead of these, the soul puts on, like a wedding garment, the inexpressible peace of a still and quiet conscience. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

The second source of peace is the thought of eternal Being who is Life and Love.

"Often," says Tauler, "when I meditate on the Kingdom of God, I cannot speak for the greatness thereof. For the

Kingdom of God, what is it but God himself with all his riches?  
 \* \* \* If we think of all the worlds that God could create, that is not the Kingdom of God. \* \* \* He who knows and perceives how nigh God's Kingdom is, may say with Jacob, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.'"

I hear the rain falling—very musical, like scattered notes coming uncertain to the ear from far-off harmonies. What if we could get near to the harmonies, bend our ear to them, and listen to the full chords supporting this watery melody of peace, to the fundamental tone that determines the "leading of the voices," as the harmonists say,—how should we then answer the old Hebrew's question, "Hath the Rain a Father?" But the question is far-reaching. Down comes the rain with all its murmur and music, each drop a sphere of beaming life, of upper cloud-land heat and electric fire. It vanishes in the earth. What becomes of the light, the heat, the fire? By admirable transmutations they clothe themselves in trim garbs aiming at motion, and now the plant ascends and the leaves rustle their reminiscence of the rain's murmur. Hath the tree a Father? And when the fruit, being perfected, empties its juices into a red circulation, as the fruit doth when we eat it, and weaves its tissue into a stringed instrument, as it doth in the human throat, which then pours "noble words" over the "perfect music" of wonderful vocal chords,—Hath the man a Father? Yet I know not that the last transmutation is more wonderful or God-like than the rain's falling murmur or than its refreshment of a thirsty root. But it is not well to interpret or explain man by nature, but rather nature by man. For somewhere, deep down, there must be that meaning to all things which our own being hath, since all are of one Source,—a spiritual meaning, freedom, moral consciousness, personality, love, joy, and their continuity. When nature so shall be questioned, with a broader knowledge and wider principles than now we possess, but on the threshold of which I think we stand, we shall see every feature full of life; and like to us. Then nature, which is our perception of God, and Art, which is our work with ourselves, are seen, as Hugo says, to be "two slopes of one fact."

How shall I speak, what words shall I find that I dare speak, what that can carry to you the thought of the height and

the depth and the strength of the peace of looking quietly to God? Faith in God and constant sense of his presence, was the great rest of Jesus. He expressed it in language, which, in the lack of an understanding faith akin to his own, has been made the material of unintelligible and impossible doctrine. "I and my Father are one," "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also," "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" "That the Father may be glorified in the Son," "The Father, that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works," "All things that the Father hath are mine," "He that hateth me hateth my Father also," "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father." He liked to think of himself as the child of God, and expressed in simple language his confidence that the Father loved him. All the good and the great have spoken of this faith as being their staff in long and hard travel, their shield in strife, their one Scripture in all doubts, their light in darkness. In all sorrows or straits hath it not comforted them? It hath led them to a cross as to a throne, and into dens of wild beasts as into a place of song and music, and into flames as into soft airs, breeding wings. Yes, and since all persons have a greatness, and all are alike to the heart of God, I can say also, In what private and hidden needs, what conflicts in corners, what obscure wrestling with sorrow among the lowly, the forlorn, hath not this looking to God brought light and strength? In one of two states we must be; either pushed and beset, sometimes sorely, or else in easy and pleasant conditions. Now, if beset, then a sudden upturning of thought but for an instant, while on we go with our labors, or with our endurance,—but one little look up without words, too quick, too perfect for words, makes peace within us. And if we be at ease and pleasantly off, then we may have the joy of calm reflection, sometimes after conflicts,—for all pass through fires at one time or another—the joy, I say, of calm reflection that God is, and that we ought not to take blessings indolently, and that if storms come again, still God will be as he hath been. Then,

"We steadier step when we recall  
That if we slip, he doth not fall;"

and this is peace.

But here let silence enter. I know not how to speak of these things. Yet we must strive to speak, for it is more true to speak than to be silent. "It is the glory of God," says Channing, "that he answers to the love of Infinity in the soul."

If a hunted fugitive fled into a church in old times, it was held a sacred refuge whence he could not be taken out. So a laboring and heavy-laden man may come to his own soul and go in, and find a Presence, being in a temple, "the secret place of the Most High," where "he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Is this not true? Is it not real?



## AUTHORITY.

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“Why, even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right.”—LUKE XII, 57.

My subject this morning, namely, authority in religion, connects itself with some questions that often have been asked me, and very lately have been asked me again, concerning the relation of the Bible to our rational thought in religion. I am happy to take this topic because I wish, as much as possibly I can, to make the pulpit answer the current needs of those who are thinking in the direction of the pulpit's subjects; and surely no subject is more natural in the pulpit than the foundation of religion.

The authority of the Bible is the source whence are drawn the weapons in all the petty quarrels of the sects. I stand as much outside of them all, even of some of them that unhappily infect with their littleness our own Unitarian household, as if they existed not, because I cannot breathe in such an atmosphere. But I recognize the necessity of taking into account the source of all religion and asking what it is, and I see that the rightfulness of authority, as a principle, and the true nature and extent of authority, lie at the bottom of all these issues, and, too, of the issue between Romanist and Protestant. Therefore, I need no excuse, I think, for taking the subject this morning, even though I treat it a little technically.

Let us first gain a perfectly clear idea of the real question at issue. What is the true matter in dispute? What are the two standards or opposing views which are set forth and maintained?



The question is this: In religious or theological thought, are our natural faculties, by which I mean the rounded mind of each man, sufficient for our guidance, and all we have? Or need we also another source of knowledge, generally called a revelation, and have we such a source? On this question it seems to me clear that the two sides are exactly at issue. Furthermore, there is no room for a logical middle ground. Either our natural mental operations are enough to guide us in moral and religious truth, or not enough. Either we have a superior source of instruction to which we must bow, or we have no such source. There is no ground between. Accordingly, one side answers "No, our minds are not sufficient to themselves. They fall into error, or else they tell us not all the truth we need. We have an authority which rectifies the error and reveals the truth. The Bible is our authority, which subordinates our faculties because it is a revelation from the Most High." The other side answers, "Our minds, it is true, are finite, limited, but still they are sufficient to themselves. They lead us into error (or, rather, I like better to say, they wander into error, since our minds are ourselves) but, also, they find their way to truth. We win the victory, rectify our own mistakes and increase our sum of truth. This is all that is needful. The universe lives on patience. God is not in haste. Man is saved and unfolded by effort rather than by results. In the processes of growth our minds not only are sufficient but supreme. No authority can overpower us. No revelation can override reason. There is, and there can be, no authority over the mind, since the mind is only another name for our power to apprehend and comprehend the truth."

Now, the perfectly clear issue which these two answers make has been needlessly confused by vague notions of the meaning of authority. It is asked, How is it possible to reject all authority? Can each man know everything for himself? Must we not take many things about which we know little on the authority of those who know more of them? Do we not guide our lives every day by chemical, mechanical, astronomical, medical facts, which we take altogether on the authority of the masters in those branches? This question always is asked triumphantly, as if it settled the matter and established authority for-



ever. I simply answer to it, No, indeed. We accept not any of our knowledge, or of the principles on which we order our daily lives, on the mere authority or dictum of any man or men. Our acceptation and belief is just as much an act of judgment as if we had examined the matter thoroughly for ourselves; only instead of weighing the evidence we weigh the mind and character of those who have weighed the evidence. I cannot do better than quote on this point the language of Archbishop Whately, who certainly would not have missed so important an argument for authority in religion as the one in question, if it had been sound.

“It is manifest,” he says,\* “that the concurrent testimony of several witnesses, where there can have been no concert, and especially where there is any rivalry or hostility between them, carries with it a weight independent of that which may belong to each of them considered separately. For though, in such a case each of the witnesses should be even considered as wholly undeserving of credit, still the chances might be incalculable against their all agreeing in the same falsehood. It is from this kind of testimony that the generality of mankind believe in the motions of the earth and of the heavenly bodies, etc. Their belief is not the result of their own observation and calculations, nor yet again of their implicit reliance on the skill and good faith of any one or more astronomers; but it rests on the agreement of many independent and rival astronomers, who want neither the ability nor the will to detect and expose each other’s errors. It is on similar grounds that all men believe in the existence and in the genuineness of ancient books, such as the Scriptures. It is not that they have themselves examined these, nor again, as some represent, that they rely implicitly on the good faith of those who profess to have done so; but they rely on the concurrent and uncontradicted testimony of all who have made or who might make the examination, both unbelievers and believers of various hostile sects, any one of whom would be sure to seize any opportunity to expose the forgeries or errors of his opponents.”

Now, this is exceedingly plain and unanswerable. It is manifest that we take not our common knowledge implicitly on authority. Our belief is the result of a simple and common

\*Whately’s Rhetoric; quoted with some omissions for brevity. .

sense act of judgment, so simple as even to escape observation unless we carefully note our mental processes. But very far different from this is the authority which is asserted in religion. *That* is not merely the effect of circumstances. It springs from our nature. It is not merely the resort and aid of a voluntary ignorance, but professes to make up for inevitable incapacity of nature. It addresses not itself to reason ; it supplies the place of reason and puts the mind under its feet. It can not be escaped by thought or study. No man can prepare himself by any effort, to judge for himself on the subjects of which it treats. It rules alike over the ignorant and the learned, and the function of the mind is only to repeat its discourse. De Maistre, the great disciple of absolutism, confesses the foundation of authority in religion when he says, "Man in general, if left to himself, is too wicked to be free." Religious authority means the absolute rule of a revelation, held to be supernatural, over the incapable human mind. I take from Farrar's Bampton lectures of 1862, at Oxford, the following plain, just and resolute expression of the meaning of Christian authority : "Christianity," he says, "asserts authority over religious belief in virtue of being a supernatural communication from God, and claims the right to control human thought in virtue of possessing sacred books, which are at once the record and the instrument of this communication, written by men endowed with supernatural inspiration. The inspiration of the writers is transferred to the books, the matter of which, so far as it forms the subject of the revelation, is received as true because divine, not merely regarded as divine because perceived to be true."

I repeat that this is a perfectly clear issue, and no one does service to the truth who beclouds and confuses this issue by foolish association of it with the views and doctrines of scientific authority.

Now I need not say to you that I accept no such authority. I admit no rule of any kind over my reason. I consider no claim so sacred as that of each man's reason on his moral allegiance. No duty is so plain and imperative as the duty of using one's own mind and being true to it.

Let me give a good illustration. In the time of Luther several of his contemporaries engaged in turbulent conduct, and de-

fended it from the Old Testament. This called forth from the great reformer a treatise entitled "Instruction on the manner in which Moses is to be read." "Moses," says Luther in that treatise, "was a mediator and law giver to the Jews alone, to whom he gave the law. If I take Moses in one commandment I must take the whole of Moses. Moses is dead. His dispensation is at an end. He has no longer any relation to us. When any one brings forward Moses and his precepts and would oblige you to observe them, answer him thus: Go to the Jews with your Moses. I am no Jew. \* \* \* If now the disorganizers say, Moses has commanded it, do you let Moses go and say, I ask not what Moses has commanded." Bold language about Moses in that day and generation, but very honest, clear and sound. In like manner, when any one cites against my reason, some sayings or deeds of Jesus, whom they call Christ, as for example that he believed in possession by demons, in the existence of the devil, in everlasting punishment, or that his recorded words teach such things in the sacred texts, what shall I say? If I speak like Luther I shall say, "Go, friend, take this written word of Christ to the dogmatic Christians. He is their authority. He is not my authority. I have no authority. I believe not in special Christian revelation, but I believe in the universal revelation. Therefore I will not hedge myself in with any society or any name, either Christian or any other."

But, you ask me, does not Christ teach the truth, and do you not receive one who teaches the truth? And so Luther imagined his opponents replying to him, "Moses has commanded that we should believe in God, that we should not take his name in vain, that we should honor our father and mother, etc. Must we not keep these commandments? Answer them thus," continues Luther, "Nature has given these commandments, nature teaches man to call on God, and hence it is natural to honor God, not to steal, not to bear false witness, etc. Thus I keep the commandments which Moses has given, not because he enjoined them but because nature implanted them in me." In these courageous words from the sixteenth century I should answer my Christian brother. I keep the commandments which Jesus has given not because he has enjoined them but because nature

implanted them in me. Jesus authorizes not the truth but the truth authorizes Jesus and glorifies him until he shines unto my eyes in my reverence, because of his faithfulness to his own soul.

I know well the charge of self-sufficiency and pride which are brought against such a position. But is there no self-sufficiency and pride when ignorance first calls itself "Faith" and then despises the researches of learning and criticism? A familiar passage in Frances Newman's "Phases of Faith" will illustrate the pride of authority and prejudice. He says, "While we were at Aleppo, I one day got into religious discourse with a Mohammedan carpenter, which left on me a lasting impression. Among other matters, I was peculiarly desirous of disabusing him of the current notion of his people, that our Gospels are spurious narratives of late date. I found great difficulty of expression; but the man listened to me with much attention, and I was encouraged to exert myself. He waited patiently till I had done, and then spoke to the following effect:—'I will tell you, Sir, how the case stands. God has given to you English a great many good gifts. You make fine ships and sharp pen-knives, and good cloth and cottons, and you have rich nobles and brave soldiers; and you write and print many learned books (dictionaries and grammars); all this is of God. But there is one thing that God has withheld from you, and has revealed to us; and that is, the knowledge of the true religion, by which one may be saved.' When he thus ignored my argument (which was probably quite unintelligible to him), and delivered his simple protest, I was silenced, and at the same time amused. But the more I thought it over, the more instruction I saw in the case. His position towards me was exactly that of a humble Christian towards an unbelieving philosopher; nay, that of the early Apostles or Jewish prophets towards the proud, cultivated, wordly-wise, and powerful heathen. This not only showed the vanity of any argument to him, except one purely addressed to his moral and spiritual faculties; but it also indicated to me that ignorance has its spiritual self-sufficiency as well as erudition; and that if there is a Pride of Reason, so is there a Pride of Unreason."

Now let me look at some logical aspects of authority.

By consideration of the nature of our mental processes, I think we shall see that authority is a simple and logical impossibility. Our faculties, which mean simply the operation of our minds, must be either sufficient or insufficient for our mental and moral development. If sufficient, there is an end of the matter, because then no authority is needful. Moreover, if our faculties be sufficient, they must be competent to decide for themselves; whereupon authority is an impossibility. For it is contradiction to affirm that faculties are at once both sufficient and obliged to hang on authorily. If our faculties be insufficient, it is because they are either false or limited. If false, then we are landed in complete uncertainty concerning all things, and the rightfulness, worth and substance of authority are as uncertain as other things. If the mind be false, how can we be sure that it is truthful in this very idea, that it is false, and why true in this if false in other things? What security can there be that false faculties understand the authority, and follow it well, or follow a true and correct authority? In this case, then, authority is impossible, because all knowledge and all means of knowledge are impossible. False faculties will be as unable to interpret a revelation, as to find the truth for themselves. Nay, no reason can be imagined why they even should know it to be a revelation, for then they would be so far truthful and not false.

If, on the other hand, our faculties be true and trustworthy, so far as they go, but very limited, then it is not certain that they are insufficient for our proper development, even though they cannot lead us to all truth, because our needs may be limited in the same proportion. It is hard to resist the conclusion that our minds give us all we need to know. For everywhere in nature we find powers and needs well balanced. But that our minds give us all we *need* to know appears the more plain from this, that they give us all we *can* know. For how can we acquire what we have no means of allying with ourselves? To say that we have a faculty of any kind, is only to say that we are able to comprehend a certain kind of knowledge; and to say that we can know anything for which we have no faculty, is to say that we can know what we cannot know. Hence it happens that no authority anywhere ever has conferred on man-



kind a truth about the soul, its religious natures or powers, which has not dawned elsewhere, before the authority, or without it. The only value and office of authority in these great truths of religion is confirmatory. There is never anything original in the dictates of a religious authority, except the nature and claims of that authority itself. Christianity, for example, has its theology, its ethics, its anthropology, and also its Christism; but only its Christism, that is, its system of claims and doctrine concerning the authority of Christ, is original. The rest it shares with all mankind. There is no religion that does not team with the same thoughts, no corner of the earth but is glorified with them. And in its formal or historical originality, as well as in its contents affirmatory of great common truths, Christianity is limited and ruled by our powers of reason and perception. It cannot transcend our faculties, and remain intelligible. If authority overstep once the bounds of our perception or comparison, it becomes instantly unintelligible, because then it treats of an order of things of which we have no conception; as a man born blind cannot receive a notion of color from any declarations, howsoever he may take them implicitly. And if authority go contrary to reason, then again it is unintelligible, because it transgresses the limits which to our minds bounds the possible. On either score, therefore, authority is simply impossible, as a means of truth in religion.

Again, authority is either entire, and requires us to accept without question the whole contents of the revelation or record, or else it is partial and requires assent only to parts of the contents of the record. If the record be only partially authoritative, as many persons declare the Bible to be, then we are left to determine the authoritative parts from the other contents. But to examine the contents and judge of authority from the matter, is to rest the authority on the merits of its teaching; that is, on reason. But this does away with authority altogether. If the record be absolutely and entirely authoritative, then we are thrown back on our own powers at last, by the necessity of interpretation. We have an entire and perfect rest and quiet shelter, as soon as we find the *meaning* of the true authority; but we seem to be left to ourselves to get at the meaning. We

need not trouble ourselves about the *truth* of the substance; but how find out *what* the substance is? For this momentous task we have only our own powers, unassisted, after all. What kind of agreement men have found in interpreting the Bible, the history of the Church and of the different sects discloses. The Bible is plain enough, it is often said; anybody may know it; he who runs may read it. Nothing can exceed the ignorance or blindness of such an assertion. "The Bible plain! Why, the awful doctrines of the Holy Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, and the atonement, have *all* been vehemently denied on the authority of the Bible! Roman Catholics confidently quote the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, against Protestant doctrines. Cardinal Bellarmine quoted more than fifty texts in proof of purgatory, and others quote more than a hundred in defence of their confidence in the blessed Virgin. Is anything more plain to the Papist than the declaration to Peter, Upon *this* rock I will build my church? Is anything less ambiguous to him than the words, '*This is my body*'?"

From a valuable Review\* I take another illustration, furnished by a debate between a Methodist and a Universalist on the dogma of everlasting perdition. By the Universalist clergyman "every prominent text in the Bible that proved his doctrine was brought forward and used to the best possible advantage, while the arguments of his opponent were criticized and ventilated in a most able and ingenious manner, forcing doubt upon the minds of hundreds who thought they had not doubted before. On the other hand, the Methodist clergyman fortified his position by such an array of Scriptural testimony as made the very temple of Universalism tremble visibly in the consciousness of those who based their hopes of its truth in the testimony of sacred writers, and they were fain to flee for refuge to the firm pillars of reason. Nothing was more obvious to the thinking unprejudiced mind than that the antagonistic dogmas of universal salvation and eternal damnation can both be sustained by the Bible, and with about equal weight of testimony."

Truly when we view these facts, it seems not that our boasted authority avails much in securing us against our erring minds

\*The Radical, Sept., 1867, p. 35.

after all. And when we remember the difficulties that time and the changes of language constantly are adding to interpretation, it is very plain that the duty of unfolding the meaning leaves us as much at the mercy of our own powers, as if we were obliged to think out the subject for ourselves; and with this immense disadvantage, that we use not the mind freely, and that it is directed on trivial and perplexing details instead of coping manfully and spiritually with the important matter itself.

There is but one way open to authority to elude this difficulty and fulfill its boast of guarding the human mind from error. That way is suggested in a sentence of De Maistre. "All the centuries," he says, "have cited the Bible it is true, for any thing can be found in any book which any man has a right to interpret for himself." This is the inevitable result. The infallible book must have an infallible interpreter. The written authority must have a living authority to expound it. The authoritative oracle of the past must have an authoritative interpreter in the present. There must be an actual, moving, living authority, to whom the difficulties of the written one can be referred as they occur. And this is Roman Catholicism. It adds to the past authority of the Bible the living authority, equally infallible, of the interpreting church.

To the logical excellence of this position no one, I think, can fail to do honor. And who that observes the signs of the times can be blind to the strength and fervor which simple, logical consistency gives to the Romanist. The world is dividing itself, I think, between Rationalism and Romanism. Said that remarkable observer, De Tocqueville, confidently, "America will, sooner or later, lie prostrate, the easy captive of Rome, because regulars always beat the militia." I think not so; but if not so, it is not Protestant sectaries that will save us, but men who, founding on their own spiritual natures, take their stand with simple, rational, natural religion.

Now I cordially respect the consistent Romanist, and I as much—I like not to use a contemptuous word—disapprove of the dallying, staggering Christian sects which drag themselves awkwardly on unequal crutches and think to unite liberty and authority. I think I maintain a logical position because I renounce all external bondage and trust only to my own reason



and spiritual nature. The Romanist, too, is reasonable, because he seeks to renounce all liberty. That great church tries no impossible unions. Authority is perfect, living, final, triumphant. Freedom is utterly discredited and abhorred. Rome stands still strong and powerful, not less in its consistency than in its mighty organization. It is the crowning wonder of the centuries. Its past is magnificent and its present true to its past. It has made many empires and outlived many more. Its ample cloisters stand silent and full of rest, and over them brood guardian spirits of saint and martyr. Its walls are old and grey and vine-grown. Its moss-covered eaves distill musical drops of reverend antiquity. It is here with us, shorn somewhat but scarcely impaired, or, perhaps, like Antæus, the stronger for the falls which have taught it to understand better the civilization of the hour. Like the mighty oak, that shakes from its summer leaves the same drops which moistened it a hundred years ago, that church stands green and hale. It bids fair to flourish when all the little, carping Protestant sects that now attack it, that shrink from bondage but dare not be free, that try to tie authority with reason and lose both, sink into forgotten graves.

But if the Papist and the simple thinker who disowns all authority are the two logical extremes, there must be some defect in the Roman position, which makes it the untrue extreme. That defect, I think, is this, that the Romanist finally escapes not dependence on reason any better than the Protestant. The church gains perfect quiet, it is true, in its own bosom, because it is a living authority which can define itself, and silence when it cannot convince. But the Papist does not escape trusting his own powers; for if he believe in the Bible according to the command of the church, he must have some reason for believing in the church and in its right to command. He will not admit the discussion of a dogma, because church authority has settled it; but he will admit the discussion of church authority, or, if not this, at least he will admit the discussion of discussion of church authority. Somewhere we must arrive at a common ground where we each repose on reason, because no man is willing to believe any thing which he thinks it unreasonable to believe. Thus the church of Rome really gets rid of reason not at all. It puts reason practically out of sight, but it can not logically destroy reason. The

Papist still depends at last on his own powers, and he cannot substitute authority for reasoning because of the very nature of reason.

If any one admit the argument thus far, it will appear plain that in last analysis religious authority is an impossible pretence.

I turn now, though it must be briefly, even hurriedly, to some practical aspects of authority in religion.

Authority, though logically such a shallow pretence, is practically of much influence among men. The reason is that men think little, and are content to follow some one without question. I was once reprimanded by a good woman for reading the Greek Testament. Her father and grandfather, she said, read the English Testament, which was good enough for anybody. This abeyance of individual thought is ingeniously used by Locke to prove that there is not so much error in the world after all: "Not," he says, "that I think men embrace the truth; but indeed, because concerning those doctrines they keep such a stir about, they have no thought, no opinion at all. \* \* \* They are resolved to stick to a party, that education or interest has engaged them in; and there, like the common soldiers of an army, show their courage and warmth, as their leaders direct, without even examining, or so much as knowing, the cause they contend for. \* \* \* Thus men become possessed of, and combatants for, those opinions they were never convinced of, nor proselytes to; no, nor even had so much as floating in their heads; and though one cannot say there are fewer improbable, or erroneous, opinions in the world, than there are; yet this is certain, there are fewer that actually assent to them and mistake them for truths than is imagined."

Now, first among practical considerations, I ask, Of what effect or use in the mind are doctrines or opinions taken thus on authority? Of no use, unless to lull to sleep. They confer no noble enthusiasm. They create no clearness of thought. They furnish no food for reflection. They make the mind inert, supine. It matters little in these effects, whether the opinions be true or false; taken implicitly, on authority, they are also taken indefinitely, half understood or not understood. They cannot stir and awake the mind to thought and earnest-

ness till first they be assimilated, made the mind's own property by its own efforts and recognition.

Again, authority, supposing the opinions true, endangers the truth, because the mind, ignorant of the foundation of its opinions, is left defenceless before the most delusive sophistry. Authority makes "it nearly impossible for the received opinion to be rejected wisely and considerately, though it may still be rejected rashly and ignorantly; for to shut out discussion entirely is seldom possible, and when it once gets in, beliefs not grounded on conviction are apt to give way before the slightest semblance of an argument. Waiving however this possibility, assuming that the true opinion abides in the mind, but abides as a prejudice, a belief independent of, and proof against, argument,—this is not the way in which truth ought to be held by a rational being. This is not knowing the truth. Truth thus held, is but one superstition the more, accidentally clinging to the words which enunciate a truth."\* "He certainly that has searched after truth, though he has not found it, in some points has paid a more acceptable obedience to the will of his Maker than he that has not searched at all, but professes to have found the truth when he has neither searched nor found it; for he that takes up the opinions of any church in the lump, without examining them, has truly neither searched after nor found truth, but has only found those that he thinks have found truth, and so receives what they say with an implicit faith, and so pays them the homage that is due only to God."†

To the claim of authority in religion I oppose the conception of thought as a duty. Is it not plain that it is everyone's duty to think, reason, search, "*prove* all things and hold fast that which is good?" To prove is not to accept blindly another's proving or take another's decision, but to *prove the thing*, to gaze at the object for ourselves. And to hold fast there is no way but by proving. One may hold, that is, contain, by mere reception; but to hold *fast*, which is to say, to close the hand on and grasp, one must prove. Can one shuffle from himself and lay on another the responsibility of living? If not, then is not every man's answerableness to live, the greater and more binding as we come to the higher regions of life? If every man be

\*Mill on Liberty.

†Locke.

answerable for work that he may feed and clothe his own body, is he not bound still more to think for himself, reason, examine, prove, love, pray, worship, for himself, that his soul may be clothed in the garments of the soul, which are earnestness, conviction, steadfastness, truthfulness?

Will it be said that the lower objects, to feed and clothe the body, and such like, are to be done easily, and safely may be trusted to human reasoning and laboring; but the higher objects, faith, hope, religion, are not easy and plain, but "mysteries" and "hard sayings," not safely to be trusted to man's reason nor to be seen by the light of his mind? But I answer first, Why not *safely*? Because man may err? But can a man fall out of the world by wandering? No more can he fall from religion by erring, if he err only in his result but fail not in the reverence, earnestness and faithfulness of seeking. For *it is the seeking* which is safety, salvation, God's presence with us. To *accept* a faith from some one's command or instruction is to make truth like coin or goods that may be put into one's hand by another's hand; but to *believe with the heart*, that is to know truth as spiritual wealth, and is great joy and freedom, not to be had till first the truth is proved by the mind.

And I answer, again, as to the higher and lower objects, that it is the high objects which most a man should seek and prove *with the whole man*. If one may give proof, examination, reasoning, to the concerns of the body, much more to the things of the spirit. If one surely will go astray and come to naught who follows his business just as another may point him, using not his own caution, much more will he come to no vastness of faith, no spiritual riches, no joy of heart-belief, who does away with himself in religious things, and takes commands, councils creeds.

But again, spiritual authority might not be so bad as it is, if always it founded on an adequate and true sanctity. But when we reflect on the effect of time to obscure historical credentials, making their study difficult and arduous; when we observe the ceaseless changes of religious opinion, in spite of authority, it is plain that authority always, in time, means merely usage. In different ages, the same authority supports opposite doctrines, and custom determines the authorized opinion

of the hour. In many of the old churches of this country the Bible was never read on Sunday. It cost years of agitation to carry that innovation! "In days gone by, Sunday appears to have been a popular day for marriages; although, as Mr. Jeaffreson, in his amusing history of 'Brides and Bridals,' remarks: 'A fashionable wedding, celebrated on the Lord's Day in London, or any part of England, would now-a-days be denounced by religious people of all Christian parties as an outrageous exhibition of impiety. But in our feudal times, and long after the Reformation, Sunday was, of all days of the week, the favorite one for marriages. Long after the theatres had been closed on Sundays, the day of rest was the chief day for weddings with Londoners of every social class.'"\*

For more than 1500 years it was not questioned that the Bible declared the reality of witchcraft in the clearest manner. Accordingly the dire superstition was believed everywhere. Yet who now holds this opinion? This change is merely the different usage of different times and peoples. "The doctrine of salvation in the church was held by all the Lutherans and Reformæd, and by the sects which separated from them, as well as by the Romish and other churches. Luther teaches that remission of sins and sanctification are only obtained in it; and Calvin says, 'Beyond the bosom of the church no remission of sins is to be hoped for, nor any salvation.' The Saxon Confession, presented to the Synod of Trent, A. D. 1551, the Helvetic Confession, the Belgic, the Scottish, all avow that salvation is only to be had in the church. The Presbyterian divines assembled at Westminster, A. D. 1647, in their 'Humble Advice concerning a Confession of Faith,' declare that 'the visible Church, which is also Catholic and universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation, as before under the Law) consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.' The Independents admitted the same. Nor was the position of the Anglican church at all different. The Athanasian Creed was given an honored place among her formularies, and the doctrine which that creed distinctly asserts was implied in several of the services of the Church, and was strongly maintained by a long succession of her divines. Among

\*Thiselton's "Domestic Folk-Lore."



the leading Reformers, Zuinglius, and Zuinglius alone, openly and unequivocally repudiated it. In a Confession of Faith which he wrote just before his death, and which marks an important epoch in the history of the human mind, he described in magnificent language that future assembly of all the saintly, the heroic, the faithful, and the virtuous, when Abel and Enoch, Noah and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, will mingle with Socrates, Aristides, and Antigonus, with Numa and Camillus, Hercules and Theseus, the Scipios and the Catos, and when every upright and holy man who has ever lived will be present with his God. In our age, when the doctrine of exclusive salvation seldom excites more than a smile, such language appears but natural; but when it was first written it excited on all sides amazement and indignation. Luther on reading it said he despaired of the salvation of Zuinglius. Bossuet quotes the passage as a climax to his charges against the Swiss Reformer, and quotes it as if it required no comment, but was in itself sufficient to hand down its author to the contempt and indignation of posterity.”\*

From such historical facts, we see how futile spiritual authority is as a practical guide. It is not less worthless or harmful practically, than it is logically absurd and impossible to thought. We have no really sacred authority, and cannot have, owing to the changes incident to the lapse of time. Slowly and imperceptibly doctrines and opinions change. The views of different ages succeed each other by slight gradations. Only the watchful see the change when it is going on, and only the studious discover it soon afterward. There is nothing stationary; there can not be. God has not made the world so. Whoever anchors his mind to authority only becomes the slave of custom, the bondman of temporary usage. But the spirit of a man is too great and sacred thus to be enchained.

This, then, in sum, is my count against authority in religion:

1. If our minds be sufficient to themselves, authority is both needless and impossible.
2. If our faculties be false, authority is impossible, because all conclusion is worthless.
3. If our faculties be limited, authority must either deliver within their sphere, and then is needless, or beyond their sphere, and then is unintelligible.

\*Lecky, History of Rationalism.

4. If we have a written authority, we must add to it an authoritative interpretation, otherwise the authority is rendered futile by private interpretation of it.

5. Views held merely on authority have no enobling effect on mind and character. Also they are held ignorantly, liable to overthrow by specious argument.

6. Thought is a duty; and the higher the subjects involved, the greater is the obligation of every man to reason for himself.

7. Authority, owing to inevitable progress in knowledge and reason, is really no more than the custom or currency of the hour.

8. The mind of man is too great and august thus to be despoiled of its rights of reason and its dignity of judgment.

“I look over the list of mighty men who have been the schoolmasters of the race,” says Theodore Parker, “I see how they are forgotten and passed by other schoolmasters, and I wonder at the spiritual riches of man, which can afford to lose whole generations of philosophers, poets, mighty men, and never feel the loss. I wonder at the institutions of mankind, the laws, the organizations of church and state. But I see that the spirit of man is greater than all these, that it can pull them all down and build greater yet, that man’s nature is more than his history. So I reverence the past, its great institutions and great men, but I reverence the nature of man far more than these and put more trust in that than in all the achievements of man, all the institutions, all the great men of history, who are but as the water-cresses and wind-flowers and violets, which come out in a single spring day, whilst our human nature is the great earth itself, whose bosom bears them all and prepares for a whole spring-time of fairer flowers, a whole summer and autumn of richer herbage and abundant fruit.”

“What new order of men,” exclaims Quinet, “are these? Galileo, Kepler, Newton, to whom it is given to read in the eternal council of the God of worlds? Let us here give them their real name,—they are the prophets of the modern world. We must not think that the spirit of God spoke only to the prophets of the ancient law, and that since Jeremiah and Ezekiel he has never spoken to any one. Those men of the old covenant saw

beforehand the law which moves the revolution of human societies. But, by this standard, are not Galileo, Kepler and Newton also seers? They read in immensity the laws which move the societies of worlds. Where did they perceive those laws, that sacred glory contemporaneous with God and co-eternal with God, if it be not in God himself? The least of them all, Linnaeus, after having recognized the laws of life in the infinitely little, exclaimed, 'I have just seen the eternal, omnipotent, omniscient God pass behind, and I remained silent with awe.' "



## THE EARTH'S FRIENDLINESS.

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"And the Lord shut him in."—GENESIS VII. 16.

We are parting with a summer of Elysian weather. By night or by day, it has seemed that we might glory in perfection. It is possible that on no other planet, revolving about any of the great suns which deck our night-skies with their fires, have these many days displayed more beauty to the eye or more satisfaction to any sense. Heaven has emptied itself at our feet in Paul's three glories, of the sun, of the moon and of the stars. We have walked in their light on the other glory, the terrestrial.

As I walked alone one evening, mayhap I was in good mood to accept the greeting of Diana the radiant; but however, she shone down on me impartially, and I bethought me what a van-guard of morals and peace the moon is. Suppose we had not our handsome satellite, and all the nights were pitchy black. I apprehend that many evils which now skulk out of sight on moonlit nights would stalk abroad on all nights, the dark hours sheltering dark deeds; and when we consider the force of habit, of unimpeded employment, of unhindered indulgence, it may be safe to think that the absence of our benign luminary, whereby the darkness would be increased, much would enlarge the crimes of night and add many to those of day. Therefore, probably, without our moon, we should be many centuries short of our present civilization. Great cities would not have been possible so soon. Hence superstition and ignorance would have flourished longer and stronger. Violence and crime would have grown so great that hardly would many ages have brought forth order and knowledge enough to devise lamps that would make safe those aggregations of men in which art, science and wealth arise.

The discovery not long ago of the satellites of our neighbor Mars, opened a curious question. Why were these little moons never discovered before? Differing answers have been given. But one theory is that Mars never before had any moons; that by a fortunate combination of circumstances the planet picked them up somewhere, getting them into its sphere of attraction, probably from the asteroidal belt of our system—a ring of small bodies revolving about the sun between Mars and Jupiter. This belt, according to one theory, has supplied the present moons of the planets, and possibly, from time to time, may supply others. If this chance to be the true explanation, think what a prodigious thing for Mars—supposing our small but ruddy neighbor inhabited, as is highly probable—to be suddenly invested with these moons, gleaming athwart her previously inky nights. Very likely her black nights, in that case, have been like a wall reared to the sky, resisting progress in virtue, arts and knowledge, justifying, like enough, the earthly name of the planet by holding it in the martial or warlike stage of progress, when violence flourishes, and robbery stalks in darkness. Possibly the lack of night-light has prevented the growth of such large cities as cover our earth; in which case Mars was for long time and might be still in the ecclesiastical period of superstitious submission to priests, this being the fate of scattered populations who till the soil, until the growth of cities and of manufactures rescues society from spiritual tyranny. Now, suppose, over this lawlessness and rudeness suddenly beam two moons, small, yet much lighting up the darkness, illuminating streets and roads, making the nights safer, giving to peace and order advantages unknown before, endowing virtue with new eyes that she may walk where only vice dared grope. Suppose our earth should be so happy as to pick up another moon some fine night, so timed in its revolution that our nights were always brilliant with one luminary. I venture that law and order would take such a stride immediately as no one looks for from all our courts, seminaries and churches in a century.

But whether the nights be light or dark, one fact of them is a force for civilization which can not be overvalued; I mean sleep. How valuable is sleep for keeping things quiet, because so much time is absorbed by it. Conceive the tricks, de-

ceits, frauds, insincerities, hatreds, plots, robberies, violences, of our present condition, doubled on a sleepless world. What a terrifying picture ! Society could not endure. As it is, the most eager conspirator must stop plotting, to sleep. Orgies, riots, revelries, give way to repose. The criminal is harmless for his slumber-time. The violent classes are worn out once a day. All the mean and petty stealing of business ceases daily at twilight. If a gambler game all night, he can not also scheme all day, but must draw his window-blinds, and sleep. There are so many hours every day when no thief wishes to steal, no rioter to burn, no robber to lie in wait, no furious man to kill ; and often the plotting, the angry, ambitious, tempted, think better of it in the morning, and go on their way in the light, no one knowing and themselves disavowing what they were thinking of when sleep overcame them.

Meantime, they who study the starry heavens do so with the advantage of a central position, which certainly is a main gateway of civilization. We have been able to gain a clear idea of our planetary system because we are so near the sun. This great luminary being the center of all the orbits, the nearer to it the observer is, the simpler the motions appear and the more easily they are understood. If our earth were one of the remote planets, like Uranus, nineteen times our distance from the sun, or Neptune, thirty times our distance, the motions of the heavenly bodies would appear in a maze so complex and difficult that we still should be ignorant of their laws. Many ages possibly still would have to pass before we could unravel the seeming tangle, calculating, describing, mapping the orbits and perturbations, as now we can with the advantage of our central place. And as civilization depends so much on astronomical knowledge, by which alone measures and standards of time can be had, by which also men are lifted above superstition, we should be still held, by these great distances from the sun, in a long and painful struggle to emerge from barbarism.

If to this advantage and effect of our central position, we add the importance of the size of the earth to our civilization, we shall be still more conscious of the physical conditions which have produced our happiness. As long as men are separated widely in space and time, they will be unprogressive and helpless, living

in hordes more or less migratory, or in poor and enslaved agricultural communities on the one hand, and in warlike marauding tribes on the other. It is when men begin to travel over the earth more quickly that manufactures and commerce arise, which create arts whereby the transit is quickened still more and thereby the commerce again enlarged, the earth subdued by roads, men informed by intercourse, and nations trained to peaceful industry by common interest and merchant navies. It can not be guessed, therefore, by what ages our civilization might have been held back, if instead of the little distances of the waterways and continents of this earth, of whose circumference our own country, from sea to sea, comprises one-eighth, we had to traverse the enormous distances on the surface of Uranus or Neptune, thirteen and seventeen times the size of the earth, or of Saturn, ninety times, or of the gigantic globe of Jupiter, three hundred times the earth's mass.

It is thus that we may liken the sidereal spaces to a great deluge, in which this little ark of safety, the Earth, and, not to be selfish, no doubt other arks, like neighbor Mars, for example, whose configuration perhaps we can dimly make out from our windows,—go rolling on the face of the waters;—and the Lord has shut us in. He has shut us in with much compulsory happiness, or, at the lowest rating of it, a certain impunity whereby we are saved from much injury, and with aids and protections whereby mind and morality may grow,—with a globe of short girth and central position, with a moon, and with sleep.

As to this earth in which the Lord has shut us in, some persons will have it that an end is predicted and destruction will overtake it. No whit startling is the notion of an end of it, since it has had many geological phases through countless ages, and must have passed at some time through what we may call its beginning. Some say, that however we explain the traditions of an ancient deluge, it is certain there will be one in the future. The pole, it is said, now points to the north star by virtue of gravitation, by reason of the bulk of mineral matter around the pole. The eroding action of the water is carrying this mineral weight away gradually and depositing it in the watery belt around the bulge of the equator. Therefore we see rocky coasts toward the north but in the south sandy flats. How far this

process has gone we cannot tell, but it is asserted that it will continue until some point on the equator become heavier than the polar land, whereupon suddenly the earth will roll over to bring this heavy point to the north star, by which the axis will be changed and the ocean poured violently over half the earth in a terrific flood, sweeping off immense areas of living beings, submerging continents and raising others, and reversing the present climates. Others again say the earth meets a steady resistance in its orbit by the tenuous matter diffused through space, by the friction of which the earth must lose its motion gradually and fall into the sun. It is said also that the geological history of the planet foretells a decrepitude or old age, because the atmosphere will be absorbed and fixed in solid compounds on the surface, water will disappear, life will become extinct. "As the earth keeps cooling," we are told, "it will become porous, and great cavities will be formed in the interior, which will take in the water. It is estimated that this is now in progress; so far the water diminishes at about the rate of the thickness of a sheet of writing paper each year. At this rate in 6,000,000 years the water will have sunk a mile, and in 15,000,000 years every trace of water will have disappeared from the face of the globe. The nitrogen and oxygen are also diminishing all the time. It is in an inappreciable degree, but the time will come when the air will be so thin that no creatures we know could breathe it and live; the time will come when the world can not support life. That will be the period of age, and then will come death." We are told, again, that every thing runs its proper course and ends; that, however it be with the individual man, we must expect the race to follow the course of all other species; that even now it is probable we have reached the height and must begin our long decline; that the most brilliant intellectual epochs of man's existence are nearly closed; that different sciences unite in fixing the period of intellectual life on a planet of this size to a very limited period compared with its past history; and that probably more than half of this period is already gone; that signs of decrepitude appear; that the American natives die out, the Tasmanians have gone, the Australians diminish, the New Zealanders and Pacific tribes are disappearing, and that even in our own race old age embraces a larger portion of life, showing a failure



of vitality. Meantime we hear of remote suns that suddenly blaze up and shine with great brightness for a time, and then sink to their former state or disappear. Already has our sun cast out gigantic flames, which wrought magnetic perturbations and startling electric phenomena on the earth; if he should flame up like some of those remote cosmic bodies, the earth instantly would be dissolved in fiery vapor.

There can be no doubt that with our present knowledge some of these predictions seem *probable*. Whatever *certainity* may be claimed by some, in my view it is too early in the day to foretell the evening. With all our boasted knowledge, I apprehend that the complexity of cosmic possibilities is beyond any present elucidation which can justify dogmatism, and that the details of geologic changes and the moral and physical destinies of humanity on this planet yet are far beyond inductive demonstration. But however, the stretches of time which we must contemplate are enormous. If the earth be to fall into the sun or the atmosphere to be solidified into metallic oxides, it is admitted that the catastrophe is distant by millions of years. Meantime, "still stands the forest primeval," still the tides oscillate, the rivers run, the sun rises gloriously and lifts clouds to screen his heat, the rain falls soft as down, the moon decks the slumber of innocence. All that ministers to the human soul and fills the earth with splendor, yet will create æons of gladness and overflow the earth with children's peals and love's delights and thought's raptures; so that the earth shall be heavier with happiness than with its mineral kingdom, and, as it were, the weight of human joy shall relinquish it to the bosom of the sun. What a great glory! If the chapter shall be finished, 'tis but a short passage in the cosmic work, and yet how crammed with magnificence of blissful experience! I think that we shall lay it down with a happy sigh, relieved to read no more for that time, till we have learned to bear what already we have perused of beauty and of joy. There will be no waste. Nothing will be lost. 'Tis yet impossible for us to say how the small and simple things or lowly creatures on this earth are economized in respect of its own surface. Little by little we explore the wonderful web of dependencies and find the place and value of each thing, from love and thought to an earth-worm, Mayhap from some

inconceivable altitude the astonished human family will look down on the last prodigious convulsion of this little ball which trundled us through space, and see how the matter of which we know so little gathers itself for new evolutions of joy after finishing its part in ours.

Nay, we never shall know the secret of matter, for the mystery of the body and the mystery of the soul are one. Both end in the eternal, to know which were death for the finite. But I see that nature sets her seal on individual life and surrounds it with sanctions and protections. I fear no cataclysms. What if at this moment while I speak some gigantic flames of hydrogen from the sun shooting out millions of miles should vaporize the earth instantly! There would not be one whit less of life or of joy in the universe. Visible species would disappear; so they may disappear on this earth's surface by slow or sudden geologic changes, the human for aught we now can prove no less than others. But by whatever other senses or in whatever other relations to be known, the individual is set forth indestructible; and for this I wish to appeal, at this moment, not to the mind with its deathless fires of aspiration and love, but to physical nature; that we may see in what kind of ark the Lord has shut us in, and how he has shut us in by such precautions for mental life and moral glory as constrain us to go some way toward him, that then we may see and follow after his eternal beauty with worship. It has been said very often, when men have talked over their fate in view of the mystery of death, and many have sought anxiously to find some sanctions or hints in physical nature that they shall live still in altered modes,—it has been said very often that nature cares nothing for the individual but only for the species; that nature has great solicitude to perpetuate the kind and preserve the type or species, but is unconcerned about the fate of any one or more individuals, who may perish and welcome, when it happens so. This seemed quite conclusive, and they who could not rid themselves of a persuasion of immortality left nature to its dead and appealed to the powers of the mind for proof against death. Now, at last, science invites us probably to go back and pick up these dropped strands, and rectify our interpretations. If “the energetic passion of repose” with which the mind embraces life, be



indeed the dew-fall of a sky which is all life, it would be passing strange if no drops thereof were found on the face of matter but only the dust of death. Now I see science begins to teach that by no means it is to *preserve* the species that Nature is careful, but to *improve* the species, not to maintain the kind intact but to alter it continually to attain better kinds; and that to this end she is watchful to guard the individual and surround the best or strongest or most highly organized or most beautiful with special and wonderful modes of protection, maintenance, and perpetuation. By this a constant "natural selection" goes on which cherishes the individual and thereby developes a nobler race wonderfully by fortifying its noblest individuals. This process goes on till by the slow change of body and soul under Nature's care, man is reached. Then we see a slow but total revolution, a wonderful change in the direction of the law. The body then begins to alter very slowly. It becomes sensibly fixed and stationary, because a power has come into prominence called mind, which itself is able to shape Nature, to modify her works, to will and to do. Henceforth Nature drops the body mainly to the care of that crowning mind, and takes up that mind itself whereon still to work her wonders of selection, and still to cover with solicitude the best and most beautiful individuals. Thus the crown of effort, the desire of all creatures, the love of Nature is set on the mind of man, in which individuality triumphs and the fires of immortality were kindled while the body yet was misshapen and wretched.

Beautiful and moving is it to see (if here I may take a side-glance at it) how the energy of Nature unfolds and enforces mere *happiness*; for happiness is a glory of creation. However much may be said about the pleasures of animals in their wild freedom, it is to be feared the picture is overdrawn. The wild stag indeed "feels" the trees with his antlers in the pride of strength. The elephant fans himself, according to the habit of those sagacious creatures, with boughs of trees broken off by him for that purpose. There are ecstatic careerings of birds in the air, and floods of melody from swaying tree-tops. There are dartings of sunny fish in clear waters. No doubt there is an uproar of gaiety in tropical luxuriance, which tops the struggle of life as a flower beams on a cactus. Animals often display an

“antic disposition” and great sportiveness. Still, probably the life of wild creatures is laborious, tremulous, fear-haunted; often they go hungry; they are frightened continually; constantly they must run or fight for life, according to their nature, and even the timorous and poorly armed sometimes must do battle under the impulse of the parental instinct, when their young are threatened. Scientific observers say that “the life of all beasts in their wild state is an exceedingly anxious one; that ‘every antelope in South America has literally to run for its life once in every one or two days upon an average, and that he starts or gallops under the influence of a false alarm many times a day.’” But indeed this fact any one may observe, here or anywhere, who will but notice the birds carefully. And can anything be more terrified and anxious than the life of a stray cat, or more sorrowful, cringing, spiritless and famine-struck than the days of a vagrant dog?

It is just so with a wild man. I suspect that in our sheltered life, we can not picture the misery of a savage. Indeed there is a charm, we fancy, in this life of liberty under the trees, with no conventional cares, none of the toils which tax luxury or convenience. Possibly we give scope to a poetic imagination, picture a “noble savage” in colossal form and fine proportions, admirable for strength, courage, perhaps magnanimity and other brave virtues, and endowed with a wild, rough radiant happiness. But this picture is a mirage on a fog. The blithe exuberance of a Brazillian forest has little joy for the wild man. He is a wretched, stooping, ill-shaped creature, low in stature, ferocious but not brave, the victim of tortures and of perpetual fear. Lubbock reports him “always suspicious, always in danger, always on the watch;” Darwin writes “The astonishment which I felt on first seeing a party of Fuegians on a wild and broken shore will never be forgotten by me. \* \* \* These men were absolutely naked and bedaubed with paint, their long hair was tangled, their mouths frothed with excitement, and their expression was wild, startled and distrustful. They possessed hardly any arts, and, like wild animals, lived on what they could catch.”

But this is not the divine purpose. From this misery, man is shut out. He can go in it but a little way. He is shut in to happiness. He must go in at the gate of it, and find the heart

of the garden. It is a saying of Emerson that when the Lord wishes to accomplish anything, "he impresses his will in the structure of minds,"—we may add also in the structure of the abode of mind, the body, and of the abode of the body, the frame of earth and sky. In the mind of man the Providential will is set and sealed, a will which also has wrought in all things for man's glory and joy. However abject and wretched in his beginning, man alone is endowed with the mysterious secret of progress, urged by a sublime wonder in his nature to seek a better state as surely as flame seeks the sun; and the Lord has shut him in and compelled him to greatness and happiness. This is done by all the agencies of the physical creation which work wonderfully together to constrain man to grow good, wise and happy. Over all creatures the same laws work. By a selection which every instant testifies to loving-kindness at the heart of things, the best bodies are chosen to live,—the finest organisms, the most beautiful forms, the creatures who by structure *can enjoy the most* and fill nature with the most loveliness and bliss. By this process, bodies and intelligencies are refined and enlarged until man is reached; when suddenly, so far as yet we know, by a strange and wonderful leap, a mind appears capable of storing experience, of creating language, of progress. Even after this, only by long ages of nature's toil the end is attained. Still a rough uncouth body is to be refined, the vocal cords strung tunefully, the dome of the head rounded, the face beautified. But from the moment when this royal mind appears, nature gradually drops the body to concern herself with the selection of mind. The body becomes nearly stationary. The man himself begins to work back on nature, to mould her great processes by right of his will and intelligence; and, Nature, most tender of that will which is achieving command in her, and glorying in that mind which can read the star-book of the skies, survey the winds, map the oceans, penetrate the secrets of the globe's structure, Nature, I say, leaves it to man himself to continue the selection of bodies, by his own intelligence; but she sits in jealous judgment continuing her selection of minds.

I quote after Lubbock the following from Wallace: "With a naked and unprotected body, this ["that subtle force we term mind"] gave him clothing against the varying inclemencies of

the seasons. Though unable to compete with the deer in swiftness, or with the wild bull in strength, this gave him weapons wherewith to capture or overcome both. Though less capable than most other animals of living on the herbs and the fruits that unaided nature supplies, this wonderful faculty taught him to govern and direct nature to his own benefit, and make her produce food for him when and where he pleased. From the moment when the first skin was used as a covering, when the first rude spear was formed to assist in the chase, the first seed sown or shoot planted, a grand revolution was effected in nature, a revolution which in all the previous ages of the world's history had had no parallel; for a being had arisen who was no longer necessarily subject to change with the changing universe.—a being who was in some degree superior to nature, in as much as he knew how to control and regulate her action, and could keep himself in harmony with her, not by a change in body but by an advance in mind.

Here then we see the true grandeur and dignity of man. On this view of his special attributes, we may admit that even those who claim for him a position and an order, a class or a sub-kingdom by himself, have some reason on their side. He is indeed a being apart, since he is not influenced by the great laws which irresistibly modify all other organic beings. Nay, more; this victory which he has gained for himself gives him a directing influence over other existences. Man has not only escaped natural selection himself, but he is actually able to take away some of that power from Nature which, before his appearance, she universally exercised. We can anticipate the time when the earth will produce only cultivated plants and domestic animals; when man's selection shall have supplanted natural selection, and when the ocean will be the only domain in which that power can be exerted which for countless cycles of ages ruled supreme over the earth."

To this great work all powers are marshaled. By one law or process after another in the realm of matter, the Lord has shut man in to spiritual power and happiness. To sketch the aids bestowed on him, or rather the compulsions that shut him in, would be the same as to detail the wonders of the sciences and to count all the serviceable ways of water, earth, air, clay, and arable soils, stars, moon, and the seasons, climates, mountains

and valleys, rivers and springs, forests, rocks, metallic ores, animals, birds, fishes, insects. But the most impressive way, perhaps, in which the Lord has shut us in, is by the balance of advantages and difficulties. On the one hand you will find a propitious climate, a soil not too fertile, an atmosphere neither too moist nor too dry, no overwhelming depressing exuberance of nature, but a fair return for effort and a free field for the exercise of man's energies, enterprise and arts. On the other hand in this same favored place, you will find mountains that must be tunneled, rivers that must be bridged or dredged, immense tracts of land to be rescued from the sea, waters pushed back by great dykes, dangerous shoals or rocks which wreck one vessel after another till triumphs of engineering build lighthouses on them, miasmatic swamps that must be drained and ditched, sandy impediments which must be crossed by canals. All these works are done, and the advantages by which Nature has developed in man the arts, knowledge and courage to undertake them, find their crowning advantage in the discipline of him by these same difficulties, and the hardihood and daring of mind which the victory nourishes.

Man may be viewed as thought, will and feeling. See how he is shut in to unfold these. He alone can escape misery by progress; he alone is wretched unless he advance. Of all creatures, he alone begins where he shall not stay, and is miserable in a wild state by a sort of wonderful prescience of the joys that await his species. His brute fellow-beings are equipped at once with comparative perfections, with teeth, claws, tails, that are weapons and tools, with skins that are warm and tough garments of wool and hair. Man alone is driven to invent if he will not be naked to the cold and helplessly weak. Other creatures with all their anxieties and wars, are a part of Nature's exuberance, and suffer no opposition save in the general process of Nature's bodily selection and in the preying of one on another which keeps the balance of life. But all oppose themselves to man; the very prodigality of nature is his foe till he learns in temperate and sterile soils how to battle with the tropical. Meantime he must extirpate beasts and birds of prey, invent ways of communication, make roads and vehicles, do away with diseases and famines. All this he has done triumphantly; the most cruel plagues, leprosies, fevers have disappeared; and



whereas frightful famines formerly desolated Europe severa-  
times in a century, now scientific authorities declare such a cal-  
amity impossible, through the advance of chemical knowledge.  
These forces have shut in the *intellect and will* to their appropri-  
ate discipline on the one hand and necessary advantages on the  
other. For *feeling*, is spread out all the magnificent color, light,  
form and sound of Nature which unite in exalted beauty. These  
lead out the admiring spirit by sense of sight and of hearing, to  
answer to the magnificence of fire and water and their geologi-  
cal workmanship. It is the subtle remark of a great student of  
men that "as the beauty of the material world mainly depends  
on that irregularity of aspect without which scenery would have  
presented no variety of form and but little variety of color, we  
shall, I think, not be guilty of too refined a subtlety, if we say that  
fire, by saving us from the monotony to which water would have  
condemned us [by its wearing of all things down to a level], has  
been the remote cause of that development of the imagination  
which has given us our poetry, our painting and our sculpture,  
and has thereby not only wonderfully increased the pleasures of  
life, but has imparted to the human mind a completeness of  
function to which, in the absence of such a stimulus, it could not  
have attained."\*

Of these balanced advantages and disciplines of nature  
by which the Lord shuts us in, there are majestic stores yet  
waiting. When we advance to do battle with the tropics,  
we shall find difficulties such as never yet we have battled  
with, and a corresponding greatness of reward to victory, and  
even of advantages by the way, when knowledge and virtue shall  
grow stalwart enough to deal with this prodigious and swarming  
life. I take from Buckle an eloquent paragraph descriptive of  
the resistance of nature to man in Brazil: "Brazil, which is  
nearly as large as the whole of Europe, is covered with a vege-  
tation of incredible profusion. Indeed so rank and luxuriant  
is the growth, that nature seems to riot in the very wantonness of  
power. A great part of this immense country is filled with  
dense and tangled forests, whose noble trees blossoming in un-  
rivalled beauty, and exquisite with a thousand hues, throw out  
their produce in endless prodigality. On their summits are  
perched birds of gorgeous plumage which nestle in their dark and

\* Buckle.

lofty recesses. Below, their base and trunks are covered with brush-wood, creeping plants, innumerable parasites, all swarming with life. There, too, are myriads of insects of every variety; reptiles of strange and singular form; serpents and lizards spotted with deadly beauty; all of which find means of existence in this vast workshop and repository of nature. And that nothing may be wanting to this land of marvels, the forests are skirted by enormous meadows, which, reeking with heat and moisture, supply nourishment to countless herds of wild cattle, that browse and fatten on their herbage; while the adjoining plains rich in another form of life, are the chosen abode of the subtlest and most ferocious animals, which prey on each other, but which it might almost seem no human power can hope to extirpate. Such is the flow and abundance of life by which Brazil is marked above all the other countries of the earth. But amid this pomp and splendor of nature no place is left for man. He is reduced to insignificance by the majesty with which he is surrounded. The forces that oppose him are so formidable that he has never been able to make head against them; never able to rally against their accumulated pressure. The whole of Brazil, notwithstanding its immense apparent advantages, has always remained entirely uncivilized; its inhabitants wandering savages, incompetent to resist those obstacles which the very bounty of nature has put in their way.

\* \* \* The physical causes are so active and do their work on a scale of such unrivaled magnitude, that it has hitherto been found impossible to escape from the effects of their united action. The progress of agriculture is stopped by impassable forests and the harvests are destroyed by innumerable insects. The mountains are too high to scale, the rivers are too wide to bridge; everything is contrived to keep back the human mind, and repress its rising ambition."

But, I think, it follows from all the past triumphs of thought and will in art, enterprise and knowledge, that when a knowledge great enough is gathered, and arts potent enough follow the knowledge, we shall lack neither will nor power to grapple with even this wilderness and subdue it to the service of man. It is the gymnastic of nature. It is the task before us to which we are shut in, which we shall find, above all our experiences, prodigious both in advantages and in discipline. When the



work is done,—who can tell how many ages hence or under what conditions of mighty engines and subtle arts?—the glories of it will surpass all powers of language or imagination, nor can we conceive what the race may be when capable of this victory. Then into this great canopy spread out by Thought and Will, Feeling will step forth, in royal purple, into such enchantments as Scheheredzade never dreamed of, such scenes of majestic beauty as might be called bewildering now; but an enlarged sense will comprehend and enjoy them with rapture. I think religion may glow with this anticipation. I believe that in such a scene the songs of human praise will be like the repetition, in that fulness of time, of the song of the morning stars when all the glory set out; and that men will know it is the Lord who has shut us in.

Thus, in a brief sketch or mere suggestion, by which I but tip-toe the threshold of nature's method, I have tried to show man and nature working together, and the material world with all its shapes and substances conspiring for mind. Hamilton says, "In nature there is nothing great but man, in man there is nothing great but mind"; but I would rather say that the greatness of Nature selects her best things for man's greatness and nurses him in divine ways, till he can join with her in selection by the powers of thought and will, and rejoice in her spiritual meanings by the powers of feeling. Till that great wonder appears which from the side of natural objects we may call a progressive species, from the side of individual experience, the human mind, it is as if Nature slept unconscious; but then suddenly in this recumbent first man nature begins to dream, and at last "*dreams of its dream*," and so awakes.\*

This word "dream" recalls noble words of Wasson, where-with I will end: "Conceive the situation of the animal man in the midst of the physical universe. What an insect, what an atomy, what an insignificance he appears! Without natural clothing, without natural weapons, wanting the wing and eye of the falcon, wanting the scent, speed and native cunning of the fox, a mere mouthful to some of his animal neighbors, feeble in instinct, delicate in digestion, more sensitive and susceptible of pain, and less supplied by nature with ready-made supply than any other creature,—he exhibits the maximum of want and the

\* "We are near waking when we dream that we dream."—*Novalis*.

minimum of resource. What can he do but tug and sweat under the whip of his own necessities? Lorded over by the immense system of the world, what sentiment can he have but that of his own littleness, subjection and insignificance? When the thunder breaks, when the storm roars, when the sea rages, when the earth shakes, when the elements are at their horse-play, what is he? The grass beneath his feet grows fearlessly when his knees are knocking together. The pines lift their proud heads to wrestle with the tempest when he dives for an uncertain security into a hole in the earth. Nature overlies him with all its weight; what shall lift it off, lift him above it, and enthrone him in a sense of the sovereign significance of his being?

It is done by a peculiar resource within himself; by somewhat, which, in allusion to its etherial nature, I shall at present call the immanent *dream* of the human soul; a dream that stands in perpetual defiant contrast with his outward experience. The forces of the world enslave him; he dreams pure freedom, absolute and immortal. All things around him change and helplessly he changes with them; he dreams a conscious poise and comprehension that mutation can not invade. Time sweeps past with its succession of days, and on the wings of the days his life flies to disappear as they do; he dreams the conscious eternal. The world affronts him with hard, material, impenetrable fact, insolently independent of him, owing nothing as appears to any principle in his breast; he dreams the primacy and universality of thought, holding the solid universe in solution forever. In the physical world force is the be-all and end-all; he dreams the conscious right, commissioned with authority to judge reality by ideal standards and renew it in an ideal image. All that he beholds partakes, of imperfection; he dreams the perfect—beauty and good without flaw and without instability.”

It is certain that any other creature so large as man, and so weak, having neither the powers of great muscles and natural weapons like the prowling beasts, nor the strength of large swarms like the insects, nor extreme tenacity of life like the reptiles, would dwindle and perish miserably. But the Lord has shut him in, by laws and methods of visible things, whereby they wait as servitors on the immortality of mind.

## FORGIVENESS.

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"Forgive us our trespasses, as we also have forgiven those who have trespassed against us."—MAT. vi. 12.

I take a familiar translation of my text different from the authorized version and from the revised version. Both of them say "debts" instead of "trespasses." The Greek word means *things owed to another, a debt, hence, things owed because not paid, hence, a failure in obligation, a delinquency*, and so, in general *transgression*. Better, therefore, render it by such a word as "trespass" or wrong-doing or sin, especially as the parallel place in Luke\* has the word "sins" plainly and literally. The Greek word used in Luke comes of a verb that means to *miss*, to *miss the mark*, to *err from the way*, hence to *turn away from the right*, to *do wrong*, to *err*; and it is only in this tropical sense that the word is used in the New Testament. It is good criticism to explain the word in Matthew by the word in Luke; and wise it seems to me to translate it according to its explanation. Hence I like the rendering, forgive us our sins, or trespasses, or transgressions. To trespass and to transgress mean the same, for trespass is but *transpass*,—to go beyond the limit. Sin is Saxon, meaning impiety or offense against divine law.

The meaning of the text is very plain in the original; but it is not shown in the old version, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." For this is a prayer to be forgiven in whatever measure we forgive. And so it is understood commonly; and many have been afraid to utter the prayer, being conscious or fearful of imperfect forgiving by themselves. But this is not the meaning. The old translators omitted to render a word

\* Lc. xi. 4.

meaning *also*. Moreover we have a more critical text than they had, thanks to the modern scholars who have explored a vast array of manuscripts with reverent care, to educe the true text from the multitude of "various readings." This better text gives a different tense of the verb in the second clause of the text. So that the revised version renders, "Forgive us our debts, *as we also have forgiven* our debtors." The word translated "also" I think has an intensive force here, as if we should say, "*as even we have forgiven*;" and both the old version and revised version translate it so in a similar connection in another place, where Paul says, "I would that all men were *even as I myself*."\* This meaning is very plain in Luke, where the word "for" is used with the "also" and the intensive pronoun "ourselves" is added, "Forgive us our sins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us."† The meaning might be rendered freely thus, "Forgive us, O thou who art perfect and holy, for even we, the imperfect and erring, do forgive;" as Jesus argues in another place that surely the infinite Father will benefit his children since even we give not to our babes a stone for a loaf or a serpent for a fish.‡

It is true that after the prayer follows in Matthew the passage "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses;" thus seeming to lay stress on the prayer as meaning to pray that we may be forgiven in measure as we forgive. But this passage stands in Matthew alone. Luke, who gives the prayer, takes no notice of this argument after it. There is naught in the gospels like to it, except the passage in Mark "Whosoever ye stand praying, forgive if ye have aught against anyone; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses;"§ which I rather would parallel with that precept in Matthew, and explain by the same, "If thou art offering thy gift at the altar and thou rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."|| For these pas-

\* 1 Cor. vii. 7. † Lc. xi. 4. ‡ Mt. vii. 9. § Mc. xi. 25. Verse 26, the negative form of the statement is omitted by critical editors and by the translators of the revised version. || Mt. v. 3.

sages mean, not that we pray to be forgiven in measure as we forgive, but that if we strive not to avoid enmity with a forgiving spirit, surely we are in no state to look for the blessing of God or to receive it. Therefore I must think that the argument in Matthew which follows the prayer expresses not so truly the Christian tradition as the other gospels do, which have not this argument.

But the text, understood as I have explained it, still has in it, distinctly stated, the two aspects of forgiveness, the divine and the human, forgiveness among men, and the forgiveness of the heavenly Father. To these two now I turn. I wish to speak of the meaning of forgiveness, the true doctrine of it, as related to God and to men.

There must be *some* good and true meaning to the prayer, "Forgive us our sins," because it is universal and has continued from the beginning until now. Little indeed of human effort, expression, struggle, is all evil, all unmeaning, empty, worthless. Every human endeavor, striving of heart and soul, form of words, has two parts, the rudeness, ugliness, wildness, fierceness of the beginning of humanity, and the beauty, love, spirituality, intelligence, which was the aim of all Nature and the divine prophecy in man while yet he was unshapen and low. Therefore nothing which is very wide and belongs to human conditions everywhere, is wrong altogether, but has a mingling of man's low state and of the high intention of Nature in him which he shall come to. So is it with the prayer, "Forgive us our sins." Let us reason, therefore, about this primal and still living prayer, that we may understand clearly the good thing which man has groped after or set his faith on by this prayer.

What then shall we say is meant by forgiveness?

Can it mean to undo the wrong act? Surely not. The past deed can not be drawn back to be done over or to be done away. It has become a part of the eternity gone, which is unchangeable. There is a story of two angels following each man, one over the right shoulder and one over the left; the angel at the left writes every ill deed in a book, but when the man repents and does a good deed, the angel at the right lets fall a tear of joy which washes out the record of the evil. But there is no erasing of record,—neither in things nor in memory. The deed is



inwoven with everything forevermore; yea, and record of it, so the scientists tell us, is on nature like an ineffaceable writing. The vibrations and motions set going by the deed never stop; they are imprinted on the heavens forever to the remotest star.

But if forgiveness can not mean to undo the deed, can it mean to remove the guilt of the deed? Surely not; almost I might say more surely not than before. For if the deed must stay unchanged; how much less, if there can be difference of degree where all is impossible, can the moral quality of the deed be changed; for this lay in the motive of the soul at the time, in the delicate spiritual state, the purpose, hope, wish, a mental deed, finer than air but outlasting mountains, yea, the earth and the stars.

It is sure and plain, and we need no more than this glance to see it, that forgiveness can not mean to undo a deed or to remove the moral quality of the deed. The deed and all its quality, once done, is a part of the almightiness of God.

Therefore forthwith I will give the possible and reasonable meaning of forgiveness, which is in the mind of men when they seek or give pardon; but we shall do well to define carefully more than is common, for we wish to know what forgiveness is in God.

Forgiveness is understood to be the putting away from the mind of an offense done us, or the renewal of inward quiet and peace when injury has disturbed us. Now, offense rouses us in two points; first in judgment, whereby we condemn the offense as a wrong; secondly, in feeling wherein we are stirred against the offender with anger or enmity. Hence forgiveness is two-fold, corresponding to the double effect of offense. For as offense kindles anger, so, first, forgiveness is the subduing of enmity; and as offense rouses judgment in condemnation, so, secondly, forgiveness relates also to this, and here divides again into two parts; first, the remission of penalty, if any sentence have been passed or be impending; and secondly, the resumption of the previous trust or of the relations thereon founded, which the offense has broken.

To define forgiveness, therefore, in brief, state it thus: Forgiveness is in three parts.

1. The doing away with anger or enmity.

2. The resuming of a broken trust.

3. The remission of penalty.

With this view of forgiveness and this definition of it, I will reason now of divine forgiveness.

What, then, means the forgiveness of God?

It is plain that the first of these parts of forgiveness can have no place in God. To forgive is to lay aside or subdue enmity, anger, vengefulness, aversion. But God is not angry, or like an enemy, or vindictive, or able to hate. Therefore in that meaning of forgiveness, God forgives not, nor can, because he has no unkindness or wrath to put away. This, it is true, is not the common teaching; for we hear much of "sinners in the hands of an angry God," and of God that he is "a consuming fire" of wrath with the erring, and "angry with the sinner every day." This is Yahvism or Jehovism. 'Tis true the Deity of the Jews was such a fire and fierceness. But we know that God is not angry, nor has aught in him to be named wrath which can be put away from him, nor is at enmity with the fallen or sinful for an instant, but like the father's heart in Jesus' great parable of the Prodigal, which knew no feeling but mourning while his son was a wanderer and great joy when he came back. It is a false thought of evil that sin is a wrong against God at which he is offended. God is not wronged or trespassed on. He is not a governor or king giving forth commands, not a legislator making laws, wronged or invaded if the commands or enactments be slighted. God is the life and spirit which lives and breathes in all things; and an ill deed or sin is not an offense against any command or code or rule, but a disobedience or neglect of the holiness of God set and witnessed in our souls; which is to say, a turning away from the nature and character which we are made for, and a defaming or injuring of that nature; which is to say, a wrong upon ourselves and a trespass on our own souls. God is the call of the soul unto glory and goodness. Wherefore sin may be called disobedience; but God is not injured nor angry as for an injury or a defiance. So that he forgives not in the sense of laying aside of enmity or anger, for he had none to put away.

If then there be no forgiveness of God in the first part of the meaning of it, what shall be said of the second part of it,



namely, the resuming of trust or of relations belonging thereto which have been broken or shaken? Doth God forgive in this sense?

Plainly and surely this meaning of forgiveness hath as little part in divinity as the other. Doth God *resume* ought? Doth he cast away aught and take it up again? Doth he suffer disappointment? Doth he repose confidence, as a man doth? Is he deceived? Doth ever he build a house on the sand? Doth he place his trust and set his love and afterward is betrayed, wronged, overcome, put upon, outreached, entangled, like a man? And doth God come to a sinner to give place and trust unto him again only because he will? Surely it is plain that God is with the soul at all times according to the state of the soul, never lured or beguiled by any appearance or pretense, nay, not even by a resolve or promise which deceives even the man who makes it, by a show of strength where there is no strength, because the resolution is not holy or humble or prayerful enough—not by this nor by aught is God blinded or drawn aside; but forever he knows the soul as it is. He can not *resume* trust or aught whatever; for the soul never had of him aught that belonged not to its true state and nature; and at every moment the soul hath of him *all* that belongs to it. Before the soul falls and sins, it hath of God *all* that belongs to it in its condition to fall. After it hath fallen, it hath still all that belongs to its state and to its condition to repent. After the soul repents and arises, it hath again of God all that accords with itself,—not because he bestows trust or aught else thereupon, against the argument or probability of the foregoing fall and sin, but because at every instant the soul is known and judged as it is, and no blessing ever is given or withdrawn but in accord with the very truth of the condition of the soul. When a man forgives in this second sense of Forgiveness which now I speak of, namely, that he reposes again a trust once betrayed or disappointed, he does so in defiance of judgment, pushing aside the argument that it is unsafe, by force of his love, as I shall unfold in speaking of human forgiveness. But this is only finite reason, limited horizon of sight, human partiality. The coming of God to the soul is not in spite of some argument against it, or in defiance of judgment, but by every argument or fact for it and none gain-

saying; for his coming is as the truth is and the soul is. There is no changeable relationship with God, "nor variableness nor shadow of turning," nor anything otherwise than as the whole truth is; nor comes he ever to the soul except as according to the condition of the soul. Before offense, and in it, and after it, forever, he must be with the soul at every moment simply as the soul is. For which reason, this part of forgiveness, namely, the resuming of a broken trust, has no part in divinity.

If, now, God forgives not, nor can, in the first two parts of forgiveness, namely, the putting away of anger, and the resuming of a broken trust or confidence, the third part remains, which is the remission of penalty. It is one part of forgiveness to remit a penalty, though justly fixed. This part has the same sense as the word *pardon*: as a governor is said to pardon an offender under the law by remitting the penalty, or a part of it. But, now again, this third manner of forgiveness has no part in divinity, more than the other meanings foregoing; which is to be seen very plainly if we look closely at it. If a penalty be an invention, a device, an event or pass hinged to the offense by a statute, sequent but not consequent—then it may be suspended or remitted easily, for the same governor that affixed it may do it away. But if the penalty be not merely hung on the offense, but is of it, a very part of it, following from it, living in it, spreading from it like heat from a fire, then how is the penalty to be remitted? How done away or changed, unless the ill deed itself, from which the penalty springs as a fruit from its own tree, be undone? Now this is the manner of penalty or punishment from God; yet this is what the world never has understood. The prayers of the ages are for forgiveness, and still men are praying for the same, meaning escape from the doom and chastisement of God. The cry is, "Lord have mercy upon us, miserable offenders;" which means, "Save us from punishment and remove the penalty which we deserve." This is the manner of much prayer in the Bible. The Psalms, those very beautiful and most spiritual prayers and hymns, have some of this manner of praying for forgiveness. "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions:" they cry; "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity:" "Remember not against us former iniquities:" "There is forgiveness with thee,

that thou may'st be feared:" these are prayers that the penalty be turned aside; and the sad Psalm 109 shows mournfully the vengeful decrees and the punishments which God hurled on his enemies and his servants' enemies, in the mind of the Hebrew poet. But this is not the spirit of the Psalms. Little of such praying is there in this exalted collection of hymns. It is a treasury of jewels of hope and praise. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God,"—this is the tenor of the Psalms, this the song of their joy, this the exhortation of their hope and trust: "The Lord will command his loving kindness in the day-time and in the night his song shall be with me:" "Trust in him at all times ye people, pour out your hearts before him:" "Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts:" "Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad, let the sea roar and the fulness thereof, let the field be joyful and all that is therein:" "Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart:" "Serve the Lord with gladness, come before his presence with singing; it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture:" "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness, and tender mercies:" "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men:" "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor:" "Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust; cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee:" these prayers are the spirit of the Psalms, these their thanksgivings and joy. Their faith and trust and upspring of joy, "new every morning and fresh every evening" are in these verses, and in such like that sprinkle the Psalms like stars in the heavenly sphere.

Yet the prayers of the ages are for forgiveness, I say. From the beginning this prayer hath wound its hoop of iron around all golden and joyous vessels of praise and trust. For God was a sovereign on a throne, a lawgiver enacting statutes, a monarch

issuing commands, a contriver of plans, taking part in quarrels and battles, very jealous of honors due to him, very favorable to his own tribe or nation of people, but very fierce to their enemies. This was the Hebrew Yahweh or Jehovah, as before I have said—holy, beneficent, sublime, yet after all no more than a very grand, powerful, mighty-scheming king, because the people had grown to no higher thought of God. They had a great sense of weakness, and the pressure on them of nature's power was very hard. On every side they were set on, thrown down, tossed about by battling elements which they could not understand; and on every side was tyranny and war, chieftains, despots, strife, cruelty. From the earthly monarch and from roaring elements, fire, famine, plagues, floods, the ancient man shaped his thought of God. The Hebrew was but an ancient man, whose Yahweh was very sublime, holy, awful, but yet shaped in thought and conceived as among other ancient men, a king on a throne, with the strength of fire and of the shaking of the earth. Even the tender and joyful Psalms have this image in bold figures—"He toucheth the hills and they smoke." "The waters saw thee, O God the waters saw thee; they were afraid; the depths also were troubled; the clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound; thine arrows also went abroad; the voice of thy thunder was in the heaven; the lightnings lightened the world; the earth trembled and shook." What wonder that the prayers of the ages are for forgiveness, to escape the wrath of the monarch and to appease him, that he may lift off the doom, the penalty, of sins against him. Hence is seen sacrifice in nearly all peoples and times. None so high nor so low but they sought to please God with gifts, with offerings of valuable things, especially the finest kinds of food; and the thought to offer the best, led to horrid forms of sacrifice. This was to purchase or attract forgiveness; I mean to escape penalty, to avert pain and punishment.

This manner of thinking blooms and fruits plentifully in the Christian religion also, as that religion has been these many centuries, and still is; nay, I would say it was so in the beginning, but that I find no trace of it in the words of Jesus. For although the words of that holy master, as reported to us in the first three gospels, where we have them the most unmixed, do

contain the doctrines of hell and a devil and of punishment in such a dire place, yet we know not how much such words were turned awry or even altogether made by the mistake or obstinate education of the disciples; and although the words of Jesus do imply or express divine forgiveness as remission of penalty,—yet I find no trait of sacrifice therein, no taint of appeasing and winning over God by offerings and gifts. Yet soon it was so in the church, for Paul is quite full of the thought of sacrifice. He is very eloquent for it, because he looks on Christ's death as the one complete and perfect sacrifice which once for all and forever has availed with God and has done away with the old sacrifices and made them "beggarly elements." Down the centuries came the same notion, and lives to this day. Christianity took Yahweh for God. He is a monarch, ruler, maker of statutes and rules, in the Christian religion; he affixes penalties, and may remit them. He is a great will, an absolute king, doing as he wills. We are in debt to him, or under condemnation, by the sin in us, by both our nature and our deeds. With this has gone the thought and the instruction which always consort with a Yahweh in religion, I mean sacrifice, offerings, gifts, smoking altars. The Eucharist in Christianity is such a sacrifice, being the very sacrifice itself in the great Roman church, and a figure or picture of it in others. The atonement, which is Christ offered up as a sacrifice for us that we may be forgiven, is the greatest Christian distinction, or trait and mark of that religion, a glory to some, to others a moral bane. And the church has grown very rich by the same notion; for to give up wealth to the church has been accounted a sacrifice and gift-offering to God.

Now all this hangs on the third part of forgiveness of which I speak, namely, that it is remission of penalty, and on the ascribing this part of forgiveness to divinity. The steps of thought are easy—

1. God has enacted laws and affixed penalty.
2. He who has affixed the penalty can remit it.
3. Therefore we must placate him, and avail with him that he may remit it.

This always has been so, anciently and until now, in every religion; in Christianity as boldly as in any.



But now I say this manner of forgiveness, the remission of penalty, has no part in divinity, any more than the first meanings of forgiveness, to do away with anger and to take up again a broken trust. For when did the infinite wisdom live and move save in a holy and unchanging order in which naught is remitted? Or when did infinite mercy shrink from disciplining? We are not under an enactment proclaimed from a throne or court, but under and in a sacred reign of order, which is in our very selves, and includes us, yet lives in us, and we are of it. We are answerable to God in us, not to rules set by him outside of us. We are held to account by an indwelling presence and inspiration of love and truth, the holy and infinite One whose justice is perfect order, "the nature of things;" not an act of will and decision, to meet this case or that offense, but an infinite perfectness of Providence in which all is held, judged, sentenced, saved or doomed, opened unto life because it is good or sealed unto death because it is bad. Penalty is not a decree, but in the ill deed and with it and of it. The penalty so is ordered and falls always as to conform to the nature of the evil; not so much pain set by decree to so much fault, but a punishment that flows from the very evil itself and belongs just to that, metes out exact justice, lets fall just the peculiar penalty of that very deed with all the conditions of it, and runs as naturally from the guiltiness as a stream from a spring. How can this be remitted, being not arbitrary nor future, but now and by nature and as wide as the stretch or influence of the deed? How can this be remitted, which is invoven with all things, is here and hereafter and forever, while the wrong lasts? How can there be remission of this, save to remit all things to chaos, like as the remission of the running of a stream from its spring would shake all galaxies and tumble the heavens together? For if but a pearl of dew be unmodeled by gravitation, all is ruin. We know well that law is not an edict issued from a court in a celestial city, but the method and nature of life, and hence the same and uniform, with "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." In which law every act has its place and every offense its judgment at the instant. By this judgment falls the penalty, which is as inevitable as the judgment, and not to be remitted nor turned aside, nor was it ever, since it is a part of the order which is eternal.

Who can escape this penalty? Nay, we must inflict it on ourselves: we must tear off our cloak, we must show our plague to the heavens; we can not cover it; we must testify.

"In the corrupted currents of this world,  
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;  
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself  
Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above;  
There is no shuffling, there the action lies  
In his true nature; and we ourselves compelled,  
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,  
To give in evidence."

The divine penalty could not be remitted without dispersing conscience, flung then like spots of light into the ruin of worlds. Hath not God put forgiveness into your own keeping by means of your conscience?—as if he said. "There it is abundantly, ay, at your very hand; but let me see you reach forth and take it, and salve it on your evils!" You can not. Is not this unrelenting judgment an immediate penalty which you can not run from? 'Tis thus that Satan cries out in Milton's Epic:

"Me miserable! Which way shall I fly  
Infinite wrath and infinite despair?  
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;  
And in the lowest deep a lower deep,  
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide,  
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven."

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It is plain, then, that God forgives not in any of the three parts or meanings of human forgiveness; for he hath no anger to be done away; nor hath he any disappointed trust to be resumed; nor are there any penalties remitted by God. This now we shall see more fully and with more instruction still if we look closely at the penalties, to see what they are and what their nature is and how they fall upon us.

First, there are many outward punishments for ill-doing, affixed, by nature or affinity, to the ill deed, and trailing after it as a snake's long body after its head. Such is the pun-



ishment for every kind of intemperance, unsobriety, excess; as in drink, in stimulants, "applying hot and rebellious liquors in our blood," opiates, all intoxicants; and as in shamelessness, "with unashamed forehead," unhomed, in alien and unholy chambers. On unsobriety and shamelessness fall severe outward penalties, so severe that they seem the very causes of the momentary pleasures in the excesses; for it were strange in nature if so heavy payments of penalty, so great losses, purchased naught. They do indeed buy pleasures, relishes, revels, baskings, tinglings, flushes; but only for a little; soon they can buy no more, soon only the long and hard penalties are left. For it is one of the outward punishments of intemperance and of "unashamed foreheads" that in no long time the power to take the pleasure is gone; it hath burned out, like a quick fire, scorching without warming. The nerves become strained springs, that will not rebound. This is great penalty, for it has a double edge. It cuts off years of righteous and fine bodily enjoyments which Nature, with most kind love of life and exhilaration, far prolongs into sober manhood and hale age. That is the first edge. The other edge is secret shame, the disgust, the blur of life and feeling, the abasement, the sense of being branded by nature and put by as a thing half-dead and worn to naught in itself, however it keep a lying front to men's eyes. Another penalty is that the body is filled with diseases, weakness, totterings, often pain, always contemptibleness and decline, wretched debility. The fairness of health flees, the ugliness of malady comes forth, paleness or vile red or colors like dead leaves, shrinkings of face and form, blotches and sores, and a hang-dog look in the face. Thus does angry Nature sprinkle wrath as from a sieve on debauchery. Another outward penalty is the contempt of good men, the abhorring pity or the plain disgust, the loss of trust and good fame, which fall on shamelessness and drunkenness, as is meet.

Anger, ill-nature, selfishness, dishonesty, are evils that bring outward penalties. They model ugliness in the face, like imps sculpturing. Anger has the horrid face of madness, of a maniac, "a cruel tempest of the mind, making the eyes sparkle fire and stare, teeth gnash in the head, the tongue stutter, the face pale or red," white as a wall, or bloated, purple, seeming

like to burst with the blood that presses forth every coarseness of the skin; and if the anger be raging and be very frequent, then it may be said they turn mad indeed, for the effects are long and increase, and pile on one another. "From a disposition they proceed to a habit; for there is no difference between a mad man and an angry man, in the time of his fit." Ill-nature, which has many forms, moroseness, sullenness, harshness, unpitifulness, unsociable retirement, sternness, has an ugliness of its own which it cuts into the face, and that quickly; for such disposition is a steady engraver, not like anger working by fits and gusts, but close at its chiseling every moment. What hideous lines are cut in the face thereby, we may see the better by contrast with the beauty which a frank good nature and pleasant kindness carve in the countenance. Note the beauty of cheerful and humane faces; observe the ease and motion of the mouth and its sweet curves where tenderness is; take count of the smooth and even brow where frowns have been strangers; behold the twinkle of the eye by a habit of genial humor; and with these there are very many habits of the muscles to which good will, bounty of kindness, fellow-feeling, have pulled them, setting and stringing them so much to such notes that they become tuned and shaped to them, and keep a harmony in the face. How beautiful are such countenances! What a light in them! They beam with fair emotions. They are frank, open, celestial. By this we may see how ugly is the opposite thereof, by noting what great beauty is lost. It were enough if the fairness were gone; but when angels fly, imps come; I mean, ugly lines seize the seats of the graces with churlishness, sullenness, ungraciousness, ungentleness, rough, gruff, sour, surly, hard nature. The sweet openness is gone, the face is shut like a wall. The open face was like light; the shutting down of the brow is like a darkness. The face no longer is ease and motion of mouth, chin, cheek, temple, but a masonry. Vile furrows are frozen on it. The eye has no merry beams, no sportive lights, but either is a cold stare or a dark ambush or a mockery of smiling. A hard unfavored cast, stiff lines, expression forbidding, unwelcoming, unkind, ugly shapes of mouth, whether set, rigid, or moving and changing, a harsh or a lurking look, either bold or stealthy,—these are the

outward penalties of bitterness of spirit, of morose and cold heart. With these there is another punishment, namely, a loss of strength and health. For it is not possible that the body should be as sound and firm, the nerves as orderly, the digestion as good, with sullen and bitter passions and harsh emotions as with genial and sunny feelings, sweet content and good will. Wherefore a body racked with harsh passions, though it may be strong for a season, yet breaks and loosens at last, so that old age is a wretched and tottering time of life; and this is a punishment of these malign, disobliging, unfriendly dispositions, that they shake and grow weak in age, and when most they need a fire in the heart against the frosts of time, they have but ashes.

Selfishness, however quiet and cool it may be, and however hiding under smiles and manners, though not branded in the face with a hot iron, as by the fierce or morose passions is done, is scored and scarred over the face with a cold blade. A pinched, sharp and mean face, where avarice and a grasping fury have cut marks and edged the features, or a stolid and sordid masonry of selfish flesh,—these are hideous sights, outward punishments, which are plain disfigurements, scars and disgraces for any eye to see.

Dishonesty, no less, has its external defacements and ugly marks. I have heard there is even a thievish hand-writing which may be known. However that be, sure it is there is a thievish face. Double dealing is written in the features. Juggling, cheating, defrauding, forgery, perjury, quackery, have countenances of their own, blemished, defective, flawed in some manner. Even though simple and trustful souls be misled by features shapely and well matched, they will be duped not long, decoyed but a little; soon they will know that matched features may be as ugly as sin and shame and lies.

So it is that anger, ill-nature, selfishness, fraud, have heavy penalties sentenced on them and executed in the body before all men's eyes, each vice its own mark of ugliness, its own defacement. But they have in common another outward penalty, which is the aversion and contempt of good men; and since it is true, to our joy and grace, that the well-meaning abound and exceed, this is the same as to say the contempt and dislike of

mankind. And this is no little punishment; as appears plainly from the effort of the unkind to obtain kindness for themselves, the endeavor of the untrustworthy to be trusted, of the cold and hard to be loved and cherished, and of all the fraudulent to attract friendship and favor, for it is only on this that they can thrive in their frauds and evils; and however one be hardened, 'tis more than easily he can bear to see his fellows look askance at him and give him wide room, despising or disliking him. Therefore there are none so clamorous for love as the unlovely, and none so jealous as the unfaithful. But it is in vain. This is the penalty which is builded around the harsh or the false like a wall. They walk at large, but they are walled from their fellow men; they can not have the precious and sweet things of human love.

Another form of outward penalty is the injury inflicted on others. This often is a very heavy penalty and weighs down the soul for life. For one must be very hardened indeed, and full of crime, or be dipped deep in the dark self-love from which crimes glide like serpents from a pit, to care naught whether he injure others or not. This is rare among sins and sinners. The common wrongs are evils of passions, deeds of anger, hatred, avarice, ambition, base ills of appetites bold and slavish too. Other persons are sacrificed to the rage and delirium; sometimes wilfully and viciously, yet the dreadful and wild gust drives the spirit, with no main wish to do anyone a harm, but sacrificing another furiously or basely at the moment; sometimes only recklessly, heedlessly, in pursuit of vehement desires, ambitions, which mean not to be cruel or criminal, but madden and ravish the victim till he is blind and deaf to the ills he does others, neither sees them nor hears when he is told of them, but drives furiously at his object, trampling, agonizing, maiming, killing, as he goes. Such are the deeds of those who pursue wealth either by slow, cold, hard, grinding or cunning methods, which "wring from the hard hands of laborers their vile trash by indirection;" or by desperate and vaulting schemes, to make a scarcity by thievish "cornering," to flood the market by a sudden torrent, to disturb the just currents of trade till all be a sea of angry waves, wrecking and rending whomsoever is caught in them; buying and selling what is not owned, no, nor even exists,

fictions by which robbery is done and disorders hurled into business and into industries, by which a few snatch spoil like booty from a wreck, and many go down. These are vultures that prey on the dead; but, worse than the carrion-feeding birds, they kill first those whom they devour. These spread ruin and loss, anguish, despair, madness, confusion, hunger and poverty and waste. They are traffickers in human flesh as much as any Mohammedan slave-trader. They are pirates, foes of all men, under a black flag of private war. They are traitors to their country. They are enemies of honesty, soberness, justice, peace. I will call things by their plain names. I will not call a villain an honest man because his villainy is big or popular. I will not call a man the less, no, but the more a foot-pad, because he robs not one or two but ten thousand. Theodore Parker said that he found not much difference between men save in bulk. The main qualities are the same. The great merchant saith he, with his great warehouses full of goods and his vast affairs, is only a big huckster; the huckster with his small stock of fruit on a corner stand, is a little merchant. Shall a man be called a thief if he pick my pocket of my purse, a "fine worker" if he steal ballots, yet a financier if he rob all the people of substance and bread? To like bad deeds let the same bad name be given, and the bigger the deed, the plainer the name. If wilfully a man disturb the market, 'tis like getting up a storm at sea if that were possible, by which his strong vessel might get first to port, whatever wrecks might be caused or however piled the sea with cargoes and bodies. Would not that be called robbery on the high seas, piracy in foul, horrible, diabolical manner? Is it any better when trade storms are made on the land? If a man derange the just tide of business and bring in havoc and wild struggle by an artificial scarcity planned and produced by him, by which he gathers because a hundred lose, sailing flushed and first into port because a hundred founder, I say that is roguery, knavery, thievery, and ought to be felony.

It is the outward penalty of such deeds, and of even baser desires still which tread down others, that they spread wide and wretched pain, incurable injury. Sometime the thieves, the panders, the seducers, will awaken to know the suffering and



wretchedness which they have caused. I know not how or where or when; but sometime they will. The little robber sees just whom he spoils, just whose bread he steals. Sometime the big robber will see whose home he made a havoc, whose bread he snatched; and base rakes, gallants, deceivers, forsakers, will know the horror, despair and ruin which they brought on souls too trustful and loving. When the sight shall come, when the eye shall open to see and know, when the wild fury or greed or ambition, shall be gone, and the blight, the misery, the death shall remain, like charred ruins in the track of war, what think you of the penalty then, the horror and remorse from such a sight? 'Tis a terrific punishment, this one among God's outward penalties, that we can not stop an injury, that we can see no end of it, that it may widen like waves in water till it bring infection or violence, destruction, pain, to far foreign coasts, we know not where; but sometime we may know, 'tis like we shall, and see here and there the spot and bale of our fury, greed or vice.

"When a man, by avarice or ambition or loose desires commits a huge and heinous crime, after which, the thirst and rage of his passion being allayed, he comes to set before his eyes the shameful and horrid passions still staying by him, tending to injustice, but sees naught useful, naught necessary, naught tending to make his life happy, may it not be thought that such a one often is made to consider, by these reflections, how rashly for the sake of vain glory or of a lawless and barren pleasure, he has overthrown the noblest and greatest maxims of justice among men and overflowed his life with shame and trouble? \* \* \* I believe there is no need either for gods or men to inflict their punishments on the most wicked and sacrilegious offender; seeing that the course of their own lives is sufficient to chastise their crimes, while they remain under the consternations and torments attending impiety."\*

So it is with the outward penalties of ill deeds, punishments wrought in the body or in our social relations. Turn now to the penalties that are inward, executed in the mind, turn to these, that by near view of them, as we have had of the outward penalties, we may know their nature and see whether they can be escaped or will be remitted.

\* Plutarch, on "The Delay of Divine Punishment;" Goodwin's Translation.



First among these inward penalties is the wrong itself. The worst penalty of sin is to be the sinner. For if the bad life, the defiled deed, be known to the soul to be bad and vile, then surely the most loathsome thing is to be what we know to be loathsome; not, I mean to suffer shame or remorse or what pangs soever for it, but just *to be it*; this is a terrible penalty. But if the soul be not conscious of the vice of its deed, the stain, blot, reproach of its life, this seems even worse than the brand of its knowledge of the ill, for then the soul is like swine wallowing in filthy sloughs not knowing them to be filth, or like a slave too mean to feel his slavery. Whichever way it be with the soul, whether knowing or not knowing its abasement, the blot is a sight to draw pangs of pity from the just and the true, such pity as to receive is ignominy and to feel is heart-sickening, such commiseration as can not be offered to the torments of a saint martyred. Oh! to be evil is the worst penalty of evil—as Socrates told his judges, saying that they could not doom him to anything so dreadful as their injustice was unto themselves.

Another inward punishment is remorse, shame, self-conviction, stings of conscience. This terrible pursuit of a man by himself is fearful penalty. For what escape is there, even for a moment of rest, when the criminal, the court, the executioner are all one, and the criminal forever is doing the crime in memory and the court always seated and the executioner always at the rack. 'Tis as Plutarch says, that the whole man is up and armed against that part which did ill; “for reason,” says Plutarch\* “that very power which chaseth away all other pains, is that which creates repentance, shames the soul with confusion and punisheth it with torment.”

Think first how severe the penalty is, how bitter the anguish of remorse. For it has a twofold bitterness, one part wholly from ourselves and one part from other men, The bitterness which is from ourselves is dire and unceasing. You may escape a little by drowning yourself in the wild whirls of pleasures or strifes or business; but 'tis but a moment's escape. You are a runaway; you can be free only by running, yet you can not run always. Let but a moment's quiet come, it is the rack again. Or you can be free of the torment of light and air by plunging

\* “Of the Tranquility of the Mind,”

again under the sea of the bad deeds. "For who ever saw" (saith Chrysostom) "a covetous man troubled in mind when he was telling his money, or a libertine mourn in his gallantry? We are drunk with pleasure and perceive nothing." But this renews the torture with the offense; when the rage is over, there again is thyself scorning thyself and tormenting thee. "As the statue of Juno in that holy city near Euphrates, in Assyria, will look still toward you, sit where you will in her temple, she stares full upon you if you go by, she follows with her eye,—in all sites, places, conventicles, actions, our conscience will be still ready to accuse us."\* What pain is like unto it, either so dreadful or so incessant? For it has not one palliation, not one soft or sweet portion like the pangs of pure love and loss, and never ceases but while we are benumbed with new debaucheries.

That part of the bitterness of remorse which comes from other men is a severe part, giving us very sharp shame. It is the thievish meanness we feel when we receive credit, trust, love, from men, knowing they would not give it us, no, nor we think to claim, if they knew our ill deeds. By so much as there is honor left in us, it is a consuming wretchedness, a base shame to us to be praised, and adorned with credit, while we know that to take it is thievish and to refuse it impossible without confession and disgrace. What a base position is this! What a dreadful penalty, to know ourselves frauds, impostures! To look into kind eyes brimming with love, trust, honor, goodness, to be seated high, to be made room for, to be called for counsel, to be commended from man to man, and the more the love, trust and honor, the more thief and liar we! Oh! the praise and confidence of men makes a crushing part of the penalty of remorse within us; and not to be escaped more than the others, for it is repeated at every corner, renewed with every greeting, smile, hand-clasp.

What a sad and sincere punishment, what dire penalty is this inward sentence, whereby not only our own evil pursues us with hissing, snaky tresses, but even the kind simpleness and good offices of others turn to furies to follow us!

Another inward punishment is memory. This wonderful

\* Burton's Anatomy.

continuance in us almost is as if we did the ill-deed over and over every day or every hour. Therefore even if we be callous and our remorse light, memory makes it heavy by the many blows of it, the continual strokes. And if we be cunning to shake off pangs and regrets awhile, exercising ourselves and disporting in gaities, frolics, or even in luxuries and revels, as if to kill one evil deed with others, memory will not permit it, but takes in hand to overcome us. So that if we shake off our remorse, it is but as if we whisk dust from us against the wind, to be blown in our faces again, or flap it from us in a room where we must stay, and it settles on us again. Memory sifts nothing, chooses naught, but stores up all impartially, the ill and shameful as well and as fast as the noble and honorable. Were it not a sad punishment if we were made to carry a book about with us and read in it at every pause or seat by the wayside, and every page had such a mixture that we could not read three or four sentences without some ugliness disturbing us—were not this a hard book to carry and a great penalty? Yet such a book is memory, if we have written bad deeds in it. Therefore if a man do ill, if he defile himself and others, if he rage and inflict injury, he stores it all up in himself. The remorse may grow less bitter with time, or with penitence, but the knowledge always will be there like a turbulent creature loosely tied, and will spring at us very often. Nay, unless a man be very proud and vain and boastful in mind, memory will torment him more with his bad deeds than comfort him with his good, and bring them up to his sight more often; for he will feel that the good is no more than is to be looked for from him, no more than he ought to do quietly and unpraised, no more than like the natural decency of his face that it should be clean; but the bad deed will stare at him like a shame, not to be expected of him, against the honor of his being, unnatural, deformed. Memory has this terror too, that it opens and sets loose its hordes on the slightest occasion. The least little incident, a sound, a color, a shape, word, motion, gesture, place, will shake memory open. It is at the mercy of every chance association. Nay, if the evil deed be a heavy crime, base or cruel, everything turns to occasion to start a fear, to call up the affrighting images. All sounds are tongues that speak our secret aloud,

all things seem sign-boards that direct to us, every event turns our eyes fearfully on ourselves. The story of Bessus is familiar in Plutarch, that "he killed his own father, and the murder lay concealed for a long time. At length being invited to supper among strangers, after he had so loosened a swallow's nest with his spear that it fell down, he killed all the young ones. Upon which, being asked by the guests that were present what injury the swallows had done him that he should commit such an irregular act, 'Did you not hear,' said he, 'these cursed swallows, how they clamored and made a noise, false witnesses as they were, that I had long ago killed my father?'" Another legend he tells, of one Pausanias, which is a strange and delicate instruction that this punishment of memory never stops its stripes till we die. Pausanias commanded a free-born maid, Cleonice, to be brought to him, with unmanly intent; but when she was brought he was seized with a sudden strange jealousy or mania, and stabbed her. After that murder, the maid never ceased to appear to him in frightful visions. At last haunted and distraught, "he sailed to the oracle of the dead at Heraclea, and by propitiations, charms and dirges, called up the ghost of the damsel; which appearing before him told him in few words that he should be free from all his affrights and molestations upon his return to Lacedæmon, where he was no sooner arrived, but he died." Thus he was free only in his death.

But what if he died not, only his body? Does memory drop with the body, like fruit felled with a tree? Memory is of the soul—must we not think so? The sad ghost promised too much; for if she could remember her death, why not he the infliction of it? We can not look with too bold or vainglorious eye into that other chamber of life, for though it be the very next room and close to us, yet it may have colors and forms and manners that we know not here, nor can dream of till they come to experience. Yet I dare think—as who must not?—that memory is not of that "mortal coil" to be "shuffled off" from us by our going thither. Rather would I say with the poet, that no punishment may be more fearful or more possible than the sudden perfecting of memory. And this Plutarch thought, for he adds to the story of Pausanias that if indeed naught befall the soul after the body's dying, but death is the end

of all effect and punishment of evil, then indeed we might think the Deity remiss in too swiftly punishing the wicked by bringing them to death so soon. But God neither delays nor too briefly punishes. For the effect and penalty must continue and follow the soul here in this earthly manner of life, and whithersoever or howsoever we go to live afterward; and the penalty begins instantly, being "of the same age with the bad deed and arising from the same place and root;" and "wickedness, at the same time it is committed, engendering its own vexation and torment, not at last, but at the very instant of the injury offered, suffers the reward of the injustice it has done."

But not only does memory open thus and let loose its plagues, at every slight shake, every little blow of occasion, but it swings at the touch of mere happiness. I have noted that pangs of memory and moral regrets start up in happy hours and blithe scenes, by the suggestion of contrast. By the bright and the cheerful, the sweet and beautiful, we are led to the dark and the unlovely which, having been done by us, have hung a chamber of memory with black. Strange that the very brightness of a hall of fair frolic, of gentle sport and kindly pleasure, should drive us to take a candle from the tables and go peer into that room of black hangings! But so it is. So doth the very hand of innocence unlock the cage of guilt, and jocund happiness step on tip-toe to whisper a shame to us. And not only the strange suggestion by contrast, but a kind of moral judgment suddenly arrests us, I have noted, and hurries us helplessly to that cell of memory. We feel suddenly that we have no right to this blithe cheer, this light of lively joyfulness which beams around us. It is too much. It opens memory and the sad shapes fly out at us. By the very happiness of happy hours they are let loose, by successes, congratulations, praise, power, because of our ill desert of these pleasures. In this I speak not to you any fancy any theory invention, supposition, but a simple observation. I say not perhaps, or it may be so; but I say it is so, because I have noted it in myself, and I am sure moral experience has a common nature in us. I have noted that if I have been unkind, cruel, selfish, or unfaithful in aught, the memory of it is started forth by happy and bright scenes and I reflect on the unlikeness and unfitness of my deeds to the beams, the songs, the rejoicings, and how little right I have to the jocund consolations



Another inward penalty is the fear of discovery. Memory brings us to shame before ourselves; but there is also a shame before others to be feared. Memory is the bad in us ashamed before the good in us. And for this, all the good around us helps the good within us; for I am very sure that the evil around us comforts us in our own evil not so much as the good and noble things around us judge and condemn us. Therefore if there be evil deeds in our memory, we fear the good around us, and live in terror of being discovered to them, and having our evil shown forth. Oh, it is a noisome pit, this fear of discovery, full of crawling, craven, base terrors. To be cast into it is poison and torment. Yet who can avoid it who has done evil? For there is no one but fears his fellow men.

It is another inward penalty of ill-doing that by it we suffer a dulling of the spiritual nature, a loss of pure knowing and of joyful seeing. Wickedness is an injury of the mind. This must be so, for the mind is made for good; wherefore to turn it to evil is abuse and injury. Whatever the wickedness be, it injures the mind. Whether the wickedness be great crimes, or unearnest careless living, or wanton rioting, or low, mean and selfish motives, 'tis an injury of the mind. Each kind of villainess or baseness has its own hurtfulness, but all injure. Now what is an injury? It is whatever effect done on an object hinders it from fulfilling its natural purpose and from acting usefully according to its organs and structure. Thus, if the body be injured in any part, that part is hindered from doing its service in the bodily activity, and very often the whole body is impaired by the injury of a part, so that for a time, or perhaps forever, no function is quite sound and no part of the body can serve as its wont was, and if the injury be great enough, the body is stopped altogether, which is death. In like manner, wickedness, being an injury of the mind, hinders the soul from putting forth itself. The mind's action is impaired. But here comes to view a great difference between spiritual and bodily injury. The body is made of parts, but the soul or mind is one. Therefore the soul can not be injured in a part and yet be unhindered in other parts, as the body can. For the mind has not one part or organ that thinks, another part that wills, another that perceives, or that loves, and so following, but the whole



man acts in reasoning, and in loving, in willing, in perceiving, and in all things whatsoever that the mind does; the whole man acts in each and the soul is one and undivided in every action. Therefore wickedness, the injury of the soul, is like in the soul to a very bad injury in the body, which hurts not only a part but the whole body; and any wickedness, though there be degrees, and some kinds tear and harm the mind more than others do, yet any wickedness, I say, is as spoiling in the soul as only a very bad injury is in the body, because it harms the whole mind and hinders its forth-putting in every way.

Thus it is that dulling of spiritual life, waning of the mind's being, is an inward penalty of ill living. The bad, ill-living man, whether he be wicked in rioting or in greediness or in fell selfishness or in fraud, or in low and mean motives whatsoever,—such a one, I say, can not make any of the mind's motions freely and according to its natural grace or valor, but in his soul is like to a body wasted in every part by some central injury or drawn awry everywhere by rheumatic poison. He can not love mightily, tenderly and purely; mayhap he will think a jealous passion to be love. Is not this a great penalty? He can not have intelligence at its best; he will not know things as they are; he will see them awry misplaced, mis-combined; how can he look from a center? how can he behold order and certainty? or how understand life or know himself or discern the garden of the world and God walking in it? Is not this a sad quittance? He grows weaker in will with every stab of evil; if he be stubborn, he is not strong, if he yield to-day, the more easily to-morrow; he drifts and is blown about; he knows his own weakness; what if he covers it by boasts and nonchalance—he is eaten by the shame of the sense of it, he can not be a firm, strong, heroic, determining, manly-walking man. Is not this a severe redress? The ill-living man can not enjoy beauty delicately, exquisitely, with a sweet and high ecstasy. If fair forms delight him being evil, they would bless him indeed if he were good; he misses the fullness of them; beauty but brushes or fans him with pleasure, when it might nourish him and fill him with earnest joy. Wantonness can see but the back of beauty, for every loveliness faces away from the wanton. In the fresh morning, mid songs of dawn and twilight, the glory of the

ocean, the grandeur of the mountains, the varied patterns of colors, fields, roadways, rivers,—the unsimple and sordid mind will see little of the overflow of beauty, and naught of it in its fullness. Is not this a heavy amercement? But there is a beauty finer than land or sea, to which the wanton man, the unjust, the selfish, still more is blind. He can not enjoy moral loveliness; the tender graces or the high glories of character are hidden from him. In three ways he misses of this great and heavenly beauty, threefold blind is he to this loveliness of nature, the graces, beauties, sublimities of the souls about us, charms and glories so cheering, comforting, blessing, strengthening,—in three ways blind to it and shut out from it. First, he will not see the good; he will walk past the most angelic faithfulness, past a sweetness like dew, or truthfulness like heaven, or love like sunshine, and know it not. For he will not look much at such beauty, nor have the humility and unselfishness which admires and delights in the graces of souls; nor if he should look at it, could he see it well, for he can see but as he tinges all things with the humors of his eye. But—in the second way—he is shut off from seeing spiritual beauty, because not only he sees the good less but he sees the bad more. He has eyes sharpened for all defects and ugliness, for blemishes, spots and flaws; he can not pass by an ill nature in happy ignorance. How blest are they who see not evil! What a source of joy not to have eyes for the means of wretchedness! How blissful the mind that gathers good flowers and sweet fruits so intently with so natural observation of them, that it goes clear of the poisons, not by avoiding them but by seeing them not! But the sordid or wanton have eyes for every nightshade and baneberry; they will find every deformity, as if it were their prey, and had a strong smell to them; they are swift crows to swoop on offal. To them there is an over-spread of ugliness on nature and man, and beauty is gone, because they see so little of the good and all the bad, and their sight runs to the hideous things. But—in the third way—they are blind to moral loveliness, because not only they see good little and bad much, but they change the good into the bad. What good they see they call evil. They ascribe bad motives, they are full of suspicion, they believe not in simple virtue, but think love and

kindness are shows put on for ends; every generous thing they translate into a selfishness, and "interpret all to the worst." The greedy or the base are sure to do this in exact measure with their own evil; for they will not bear to think others better than themselves, but make all into their own likeness, sordid or wanton. What a stark and dreadful triple blindness is this,—not to see the good, and to gaze at the bad when the good is by, and to make the bad still more by translating the good into it! Is not this a bitter scourging, a ruinous forfeit, a woful punishment?

Such are the divine punishments for sins; not invented and affixed to the bad deed by a sentence or decree, as if the penalty might be otherwise by decree, or the punishment of one wickedness be changed about to become the penalty of another; not so, but springing from the ill deed and belonging to it, not to be parted from it, and a very portion of it, so that the evil can not be done but instantly its penalty begins. Now, these penalties I have set forth that we may judge and see clearly whether penalty ever is remitted by the Eternal Father. By looking at the punishments, is it not plain that none ever is passed over or turned aside?—that God never stays or bars a bad deed from shooting instantly into the effect which is its punishment; nor could he, without shaking all the connections of things till the stars should drop like tears into a basin of ruin—is this not plain to us? Can the furrows and the expressions, the red and the pale, the tremblings and staggers of "unbashful foreheads" and wanton feet, of drunkenness, fury, fraud,—can these be remitted? Can these be clogged and bidden go back, while the sins go forward? Can the contempt and aversion of men be remitted? Can the injury, woe, heartache, shame, which the ill deed has wrought on others, be fended away, and yet the deed flaunt on? Can secret remorse or the shame of receiving honor and trust unmerited, or the haunting ghosts of memory or the craven fear of discovery, be remitted? Can these be lopped off the wickedness, as if limbs of it, whereas they are in the heart of it? Or can the dulling of spiritual faculty, the darkening of reason and the clouding of beauty, be remitted, as if wickedness were made no injury or injury no enfeeblement? Can this be? Were this the order and the presence of God

which "hath no variableness neither shadow of turning?" Surely, when we look on the penalties of God, we see plainly and solemnly that they are never raised nor stayed; but they go with the wickedness and are in the heart of it, so that to think of the remission of them is to think of the wickedness as existing without the very heart and nature of the wickedness.

But now, I say that as no penalty is remitted, so we ought not to wish it to be remitted. Nay, if we will think of it like men, we can not wish to escape any penalty of God which we have incurred. Often it is no dishonor to wish to escape the punishments of men; for these are but arbitrary and invented, without natural consequence, often devised in wrath, inflicted unjustly, untempered with the exact inward truth of our faultiness, our struggle and fall. But who, if he have just manhood, can wish to escape from God? No, we can not desire remission of divine penalty. It were unmanly. There were no dignity in it. It were slavish, shambling, beggarly. But it were worse than these shames; it were impious, and bold against eternal order and beauty. The penalty is in the infinite order of God. It is a religious fact of Providence. It links with the planets and the fixed stars, travels with the sun, floods with the ocean. It is fixed and wrought in all this majestic system, this infinite glory, which moves so silently and perfectly,—the eternal beauty of God. It is in the heart of all truth, all sincerity, love, and whatever is of the eternal moral order. Would you wish it away? Dare you touch it, save with the soul's worship? Dare you edge amendment into the solemn and divine order? "Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when He laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? \* \* \* Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days, and caused the day-spring to know his place, that it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?" Nay, you will know it is impious to lay he hand of a froward wish on this holy order. You will not

dare flee from that order, nor from any penalty therein, which is the eternal being of God made visible.

To this point, now, we have come by reasoning of forgiveness and by looking on divine penalties,—to this point, that there is no forgiveness with God as man forgives, because no one of the three portions of human forgiveness has any part in God; for neither hath he anger to be put away, nor hath he a disappointed trust to be ventured again, nor is his perfection of law ever turned aside to remit a penalty. But what then of our text, “Forgive us our sins?” What meaning has it? What is the forgiveness of God? This now we must answer. For not meaningless are all these cries and prayers of the ages. As I said in setting out on this subject, there must be some good true thought in the words, “God’s forgiveness;” because the cry is universal and has persevered from the beginning. What human struggle is altogether hollow and unmeaning? For all striving and anguish of soul, and forms of words therefrom, are minglings of the rudeness of man’s state at the moment with the spiritual ideal in him of what he must become. Therefore if there be little that is wholly truth, there is nothing that wholly is error.

Now, we shall know what the forgiveness of God is if we consider what has happened when we are in darkness and evil. For if a man see not the sun, there might be either of two reasons for it; one, that the sun had withdrawn from the heavens; the other, that the man had turned him from the sun. If, therefore, we be in darkness and sin, what has happened? Hath God turned from us or have we turned from him? Surely it is we who have turned away from him. This shows us what the forgiveness of God is. It is his everlasting, unfailing, unlessened mercy, the fact, not that again he has turned toward us, but that never he was turned away, never estranged. With finite man forgiveness is so imperfect that it is but the healing, as much as may be, of some soreness of mind, an aversion, a heart-burning, grudge, separation; and only as much as may be, I say,—which seldom is wholly. A friend wrote me, “We may cement broken confidence, but the crack is always there, the charm has vanished, the happy bird-like spring and song are gone; we pull up a lumbering ladder on which to try to climb.” So im-



perfect is human forgiveness. But the forgiveness of the Eternal, the perfect forgiveness, is this, that never he was alienated, never for a moment, never parted from us, never provoked.

The forgiveness of God is a pursuing love, never tired, never uncertain, unsteadfast, backward or unresolved, always perfect, present, unswerved. Look at all things. See how pityingly events are ordered for our weakness; how they stoop to us when we fall; how tenderly the order of God takes up his children and leads them; how the flowers spring up before and behind, and love shines on the path. What helps, what incitements, invitations! What warnings, admonitions, exhortations! How our wanderings are followed by calls and penalties inward and outward, till we turn again to the light which never was turned from us! Look at these things till we know the forgiveness of God, the eternal forgiveness, and learn that never his face was averted, but ours was turned away.

When Paul says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," I say, Yes, and to them that love him not. For there is one good for me, in whatsoever state of soul I be, and another good for thee, my neighbor, in thy condition of spirit whatsoever; and what is good for me is not mislaid on thee nor thy good on me, but each receives his own discipline; and all things work together for good to all. "Look," cries the ancient singer, "Look at the generations of old and see! Did ever any trust in the Lord and was confounded?"\* Indeed not one. No, not a soul. For though the outward man perish, or power and possessions melt away like snow, he hath "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "Did any," continues the singer, "abide in his fear, and was forsaken? Or whom did he ever despise that called upon him?" None, indeed; nor was any forsaken that abode *not* in his fear, nor ever any despised that called *not* upon him; but each was followed with peculiar love, with ward and exercise.

The forgiveness of God is as if a son returned to his father and thus they speak together:

My father, pardon me.

My child, to pardon is to turn toward thee again; and I never was turned away from thee.

\*Ecclesiasticus, ii.



Then why hast thou not taken me to thy heart, as of old, my father?

My child, I could not take thee till thou camest.

But why hast thou not sought for me, father.

I sought thee best, my child, by leaving thee to thyself, yet watching over thee invisibly.

Such is the forgiveness of God. The prayer for forgiveness, if it be such a prayer as the perfection of that forgiveness should call forth, is a lowly utterance of penitence, of sincere aspiring to the good and the right, of earnest search for communion with God and climbing to it, turning the face to him again. And to this penitence, this wish, prayer, seeking of spirit, success and communion come from above in such degree as the search is pure and single, and accords with the state of the soul as it is; and especially in measure as what is sought is not the turning aside of anger, which never was with God, nor the remission of penalty, which no more can be than the divine order be overthrown; but singly communion with the divine life.

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I turn now to speak of forgiveness among men. This I will strive to do carefully and reasonably. For it is very important. What can be more grave or vital than forgiveness among men? For it is plain that injuries, hurts, imperfections abound; if healing abound not with the hurts, I mean, if forgiveness be not at hand for the injuries, what can save us from an up-piling of wrongs and grievances till we all be buried under them? Therefore as I have reasoned of divine forgiveness, to show that it is not like human pardoning, but is of a different nature, and is a peculiar, infinite, eternal perfection, so now I will reason of man's forgiveness, that we may be informed by reason, and be able the better, the more nobly and the more surely, to exercise the virtue and beauty of forgiveness.

Here I will remind you of the definition of human forgiveness with which I set out, namely, that it is threefold—

1. The doing away with anger or enmity.
2. The resuming of the broken trust.
3. The remission of penalty.

I will examine each of these three parts of forgiveness in human relations.

Our human relations divide into two parts, public or collective, and private. By public or collective, I mean the relations of men to their public servants, governors, legislators, teachers. The private relations, are those between individuals. I will speak first of public or collective forgiveness, meaning the pardoning by the community, or by any large company of men therein, of offenses against public life, interests, rights, morals.

I think firmly that public offenders never should be forgiven by the citizens. I mean that, in the case of betrayal of public trusts, of whatever kind, forgiveness should take, at best, only two of its three steps, and the other step never, or only if the offense be light and not treacherous or disgraceful, and then only after an exceeding long time.

The first part of forgiveness should obtain at once; which is to say, anger ought to cease, and the sooner the better, for then the people will act reasonably and see the right way. Anger is not made honorable by surging through a crowd. As one man is but a maniac while he is in a rage, so many persons angry together become a mob. Public wrath sometimes sweeps over a people as fiercely and insanely as anger through a man's veins. Bishop Butler said, "Why may not whole communities and public bodies be siezed with fits of insanity as well as individuals? Nothing but this principle, that they are liable to insanity equally at least with private persons, can account for the major part of those transactions of which we read in history." These words are no little weighty; for if to be a madman is to act under fanciful illusions, unreasoned shadows and dreams, how maniac have been countless assemblies, senates, concourses of men; and how little like it is that men will be calm and rational in councils and congresses if they be not calm and rational at home. It need not be enforced that public madness should cease. Anger or fury ought to be put away as quickly by a company as by a man. Therefore in point of wrath and enmity, public offenders should be

forgiven like faithless friends, or other kinds of private truants.

Now, as to the second part of forgiveness, the suspense or remission of penalty, may this be granted to public offenders? May they be forgiven in this second part or degree of forgiveness? Yes, they may; and sometimes it seems well they should. Sometimes there are so many traitors or recreants at once that all can not be punished without very sad and cruel effects and multiplied pains, ten thousand imprisoned or banished or destroyed; at which humanity revolts. And if not all, why one? Sometimes too, conditions and events may go very far to bespeak pity. 'Tis seldom that it is an error to spare, at least in a degree if not wholly. 'Tis very hard to look into the heart and know all its pangs and wrestlings and temptations. Wherefore very often mercy is no more than a due humility and religious caution under our human ignorance and the short sight that we walk with. So that I say penalty may be spared public offenders; yet with care and reserve, and not so freely as may be done with private culprits; because it is to be questioned what the effect on the state may be, whether the remission of penalty may cause like offense to start up and flaunt itself daringly. For sometimes the hard of heart or the selfish will use mercy but as food whereon to feed themselves to strength to make another attack. This is a very sad sight, but I have seen it, even in private malice I have seen it; wherefore caution is to be had, and it seems not right for the officers of state, ay, or for the whole people, to take as much risk for the whole as a man virtuously may take for himself. Therefore I urge that public rogues, traitors, corrupt officers, betrayers of trusts, may be forgiven in respect of punishment and mercifully let go, but only with care and reserve, not so fully as a private man may fend off punishment from his enemy.

But as to the third part or degree of forgiveness, the resuming of forfeited trust, the reposing anew of a confidence betrayed, how stands the public offender in this point? I answer without scruple or hesitation, that in this part of forgiveness there should be no public pardoning. I speak wholly of the officers and servants of the people. I mean not to say hereby that if some unhappy man be imprisoned for legal or moral fault, and thereafter he earn respect from his superiors or from his fellow-men

by good conduct and repentance, he may not be pardoned, put in trust again and given another trial of his manhood; for this may be not only wise and expedient, but very just. I speak of persons in trust, who, having been placed over public interests, have betrayed them by selfish policy, by corrupt practice, or even only by gross failures of judgment. The citizens never should forgive such offenders, except to pity them without wrath or to stay some penalty; never, however they may seem to be repentant, to reinstate them in office, or to trust them again; for public safety requires this firmness. Wendell Phillips was wont to say that republicans should have long memories; and if no tincture of vindictiveness be included, it is a wise saying. A doctrine of stern unforgiveness as to public service is needed in political life, and is not a wrathful feeling prolonged cruelly, but a sound judgment continued reasonably. For though one who has failed once may do the like never again, yet the risk is too great that like causes, if any happen, again will lead him astray. Besides, it is for the public health that so great infamy should attach to the injury of it, that no man once poisoning it, though never so little, can lay his hand on the body politic again.

This, therefore, if I have not erred, is the true doctrine of human forgiveness touching public offenders who are corrupt or tyrannous officers, betraying the people's trusts, or blundering servants unfit for their posts, that wrath and vengeful feeling should be checked straightway, and with cool judgment affixed punishments often may be remitted mercifully, but that the penalty of distrust should never be lifted, nor the offender be forgiven in this third degree, to be trusted again by the people.

Now I come to private forgiveness, between man and man. This falls into two divisions; first, forgiveness of a friend, secondly, forgiveness of a stranger, or of one so little near to us that he is but as a stranger whose name we know, passing us often but not near to the heart.

As to a stranger, I would counsel firmly that he be treated like a public offender, and I contend that this is salutary, right and needful. Here, too, anger is to be subdued; and so far, forgiveness is a duty to any stranger, howsoever an offender. Also I would counsel not to push penalty, if by us punishment can be averted without harm to any. But I would urge a doctrine of

unforgivingness in judgment; for it is sound precaution to take no stranger in who once has robbed the house, or ever again to repose a trust that once has been violated. For, however we may argue or strive to predict, it will remain always a reasonable fear that whoever, for passion or pride or interest, has served us ill once, for like or greater cause, if any happen, will do the same again. Therefore in this third part of forgiveness, which also is the greatest and the most delicate part, the resuming of trust, I would counsel that seldom a stranger be forgiven.

But this is very serious counsel, very serious, critical and grave, not to be taken lightly or rashly, but only thoughtfully and with much careful conscience. Especially two prime and weighty conditions are to be observed. The first is, that if never we are to forgive a stranger in the third part of forgiveness so as to entertain him again with trust, then we must make very sure, with utmost simple sincerity, that we do forgive in the other two parts; not that we forgive in words or profession, but that truly and in deed and in our very hearts we forgive in these two parts, doing away with anger and all harshness, and, as much as may be, refraining from punishment, and altogether from punishment which has any taint of ill-feeling in it.

The second condition is found in cases of charity. For if we be dealing with a brother man who is needy, who may suffer much, and especially may bring hardship on innocent ones depending on him, if we cast him off, then it may be a duty of mercy to give him place and trust again, and entreat him in every way to do better and to seize his opportunity and be faithful to the trust. The duty of helpfulness is a very sacred and urgent duty. We ought to forgive a stranger so perfectly in respect of anger and enmity subdued, and penalty laid aside, that we will not stand in his way, not by the least sign or act in his way; and then that we will help him if he be in need or in danger or has aught at risk in which we may avail; and then, if there be any chance or hope for it, as very often there is, that joyfully we will strive to help him up from the evil he does, and win him to the good; for this is the greatest of all helpfulness. And if this may be done best in any case by bestowing trust once more, then it may be a



duty of mercy thus to put ourselves at risk. This is a situation which tests the grain of the sincerity of the soul and of the unselfish truthfulness with oneself to which a man may reach; for each case must be judged by itself and on its own points; and how shall any one judge, or see the right and perfectly good way, if he come not to it with a very simple and sincere soul and with the very truth of kindness in his purpose.

This, therefore, would be my sum of doctrine and counsel about the forgiving of strangers, when they have wronged or deceived us,—that we must cease from anger, and must not be harsh or urgent for punishment, or revengeful; but that it will not be wise for us to give them trust again, nor truly helpful to them to lay ourselves in their power to be ill-used again; yet that this is a very serious and grave charge to take, and never taken rightly if not weighed well in honest thought and tempered with mercy.

Now I come to forgiveness of friends. What shall I argue and counsel in this case?

First it is to be noted that whatever the true counsel be, it has to be applied to many grades of friendship; and whatever duty is based on friendship must rise with the grade and dear-ness of the friendship. There are many degrees and kinds of fellowship, which must be treated each according to its station, from the entire stranger to the closest bosom friend. Therefore right action in this case calls for sound judgment; and judgment never is sound, nor worth aught, unless it be guided by sincerity, instructed by unselfishness, moved by kindness.

We shall see clearly the true counsels for forgiveness of friends if we recur to the definition of forgiveness and apply its three parts to this case.

In friendship forgiveness ought to be speedy and absolute in two parts. Anger should flee, of course; and better if so quickly that it has merely passed like an ill-bird of passage. Also penalty will be remitted, of course. But what is the right counsel touching the third, the most delicate and signal part of forgiveness, namely, the resuming of a betrayed and broken trust? Here there are two cases, in which the counsel must be different; these are, the case in which the friend who has done ill is sorry and repentant, and the case in which he is not re-



repentant, but still flaunts the wrong, either declaring it to be right, or unwilling to make confession and amends. Now, both of these cases stand the same regarding the first two parts of forgiveness. Whether the ill-doing friend be sorry or not sorry, or whether he seek forgiveness repentantly or stand aloof defiantly, we must do away with anger, sink all bitterness, and waive all punishment. For the third part of forgiveness the counsel is easy as to the unrepentant friend. In this part he must not be forgiven. He must not be trusted again, so long as he carries himself proudly in his wrong. But should he be sought by his friend whom he has injured, and entreated to repent, to confess the wrong and amend it to what stretch he can? It may be. Great reverence and obedience should be paid to love. And it is very sure that no one should believe any injury to him from his friend till he has gone to him and asked him whether indeed he has done so. But if he acknowledge it without grief, ungracious, churlish, defiant, then how much he should be entreated is a nice case in love, which can not be decided save as each example arises, and then safely only with love all aflame and pleading faithfully in us; and it will turn much on how long time has hallowed the friendship and how deep in the bosom the friend hath lain. For it is to be noted, too, that some honor is to be paid to trust, that it be not offered to ruthless flouts and mocks; for trust is too precious to be turned forth a-begging, and it is said fitly that pearls should not be sown to be trodden by hoofs,—beauty unreverenced, love ravaged with tusks, tenderness styed and bemired.\* But if sometimes it be a bedraggling of love or of trust to offer it, or to entreat a cold heart or pray at the door of selfishness, sometimes, too, it is so to make confession and seek forgiveness; and this is to be inquired of carefully, if there be any signs of such misuse of an offered repentance and humility. The seeking of forgiveness by confession of fault is nobility of character; but I have observed that for good to accrue, there must be elevation in him whose pardon is sought as in him who has risen to the height of seeking it. It is not always well to make confession, since however we may long to do it, it may have been proved that we deal with one who takes it not nobly, but

\* Mt. vii. 6; Lc. xv. 16; Prov. xi. 22; Mt. xv. 27, apparently a proverbial expression (Mt. vii. 6) turned by the woman to her advantage with tender humility.

ignobly, and perverts the fact. I have known persons who, if any fault was confessed, assumed at once that he who so acknowledged one error was faltering in other positions or claims; and so what was a gracious humility became an injustice to the one who so had humbled himself, and even the occasion of more conflict. This is a vileness; but if nevertheless it exist, as I have seen it, silence may be more just than to suffer perversion of the confession, or reinforced strife.

In this case, then, of a friend who has done us ill, and is not sorry, I say he is not to be forgiven in the third part of forgiveness, but is to be distrusted thenceforth. But if a friend be sorry and come to us repentant, which is the other case, then, I say, he must be forgiven forthwith, completely and in wholeness, in all three parts of forgiveness,—anger turned to gentleness, punishment never thought of, and trust renewed. But you will say to me, How can trust be renewed by will or effort, as anger can be put to flight and penalty remitted? For whether there be grounds of trust is a judgement, and as the matter is before us, like a shape or color before the eye, so we must see it; and we can not judge so or so at will, but only as the reason leads. But I answer, first, that we must carefully consider every point to our friend's excuse, or advantage, so that our judgment may do its best for him and our love be a defense of him; and, secondly, that, however the judgment may hang back, yet for a friend, and in proportion to the dearness and closeness which have been between us, we shall repose trust again in *outward act*. This we can do. Unto this we are able by the heart. However we strive, it may be impossible to revive inward trust; for this is a judgment and must move by evidence or probability. But we will trust our friend again in act—that is, in outward relation. And this is a triumph of love. For in point of reason, it may be no safer so to forgive our friend, in this last and greatest part of forgiveness, than to pardon a stranger; but love has both its own rights and its own powers, in virtue of which we take risk, because it is according to the nature of love to do so, though the judgment call it risk notwithstanding. Thus it must stand until by long faithfulness the erring friend have won again the right to be trusted in our mind by reason as in our acts by love.

As I said of strangers, so now of friends who have wronged us, I say that forgiveness is a virtue so great and heavenly that it grows on itself and goes on to more than the three parts of its definition; for as by the definition or nature of forgiveness, penalty ought to be put away very often, reprisal or vengeance always, which is a negative rule, that we should not do injury or hurt in return for an injury, so there comes forth a positive rule, that we should try to do good for the evil and to be useful to the wrong doer. We ought to follow him with help; in any thing in which we may bless or benefit him, we ought to strive after him with help; and especially we should follow hard with help (but modestly and not setting ourselves above him as instructor, for then there is no help) to lift him above the very ill that he does us and win him from it; and if we can not trust him in mind, still we must follow with help; and if he betray us so much that neither in mind nor in act is it safe or right to trust him again, still we must follow with help if there be any way to it. For this is like the divine forgiveness which follows us and winds around us to reclaim us, and never is turned away.

Here to sum up this argument of human forgiveness, I would set the doctrine of forgiveness in these rules: 1. In all cases, exercise forgiveness in the first part, that is, in victory over bitter feelings. 2. In many cases, public and private, penalty may be remitted, and always it ought to be when it can be; which is another element in forgiveness. 3. As to public offenders, judgment should never be changed or suspended or trust reassumed. 4. In private, often this judgment may be put in abeyance and trust bestowed again, so that forgiveness shall be perfect in act, and if possible thereafter in mind also; but not often toward a stranger, and toward a friend in proportion as the love is dear; and this not because it is reasonable except as love is rational, for the risk is real notwithstanding, until a long faithful probation shall have lifted it away.

Now I have three thoughts for you, wherewith to end this long sermon of forgiveness. They are, The difficulty of forgiveness, The beauty of forgiveness, and, A beauty that is greater than forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a hard virtue. It is not to be hidden that it is very hard. To some natures it is a great struggle and

desperate wrestling ever to forgive at all. These are not bad natures on that account. They are like in spirit to those bodies with which some particular disease goes very hard. But there are few to whom it is not a hard virtue if they have been hurt much. So delicate and great a virtue is forgiveness that sometimes if we have injured another and he be provoked thereby to do us ill, we seem to find it harder to forgive than if we had done no wrong first, and the enmity hangs to us more bitterly. This seems a strange thing, and when I have thought I beheld it, I have rubbed my eyes and looked again, to be sure that I saw aright. If I be not mistaken and have seen the fact truly, how is it to be understood? Perhaps forgiveness is so hard a virtue and draws so heavily on the soul's powers, that when we first have done injustice, we lose so some power of soul to be applied in forgiveness, and our own wrongdoing so weakens us that we find it harder to forgive another's. And there may be a shame evoked in us by our ill-deed which makes us dislike the person to whom we did the ill; or, saddest of all, we may have done the injury because of an aversion, distaste, prejudice, lack of human love. It is a common saying that we find nothing so hard to forgive to another as our having injured him. But however this, forgiveness is a hard virtue. The hard part to master is the first part of forgiveness. It is easy by the aid of a little will and a little shame, to refrain from punishment or vengeance; harder, but not very hard, to take the risk of trust once more; but to free ourselves of harsh feeling and cast out the last dregs of it, is hard; if the injury have been bitter, faithless, treacherous, it is very hard indeed.

It will be well to remember, also touching this matter, how great and valuable a quality respectfulness is. Indeed, I know naught more precious; for if tenderness be the joy of life, respectfulness is its dignity. Few things seem harder to forgive than unrespectfulness; but if it be disrespectfulness, forgiveness is very hard indeed. This is not because of the hurt or the anger, which quickly may fly away; much more because of the poor health which then we suffer; for nothing weighs down, burdens and wastes us like unrespectfulness inclosing us; but most of all, this will not be forgiven because of its effect on

the judgment, which is the third element in forgiveness. For whoever walks daily alongside of faithfulness, however simple, or of any superiority, be it of age, or position, or whatever, without a warm respect for the worth thereof, made plain in deferential behavior—whoever so walks, I say, empty of respectfulness, “is but shallow water;” and what shall heal the hurt of this judgment that it is shallow water? or how can love be cheated of its sounding line? Therefore unrespectfulness is very hard to overlook, because it works in such manner on the judgment. This is one of the hardest points in the hard virtue of forgiveness.

But there are blessed and helpful things to say. The first, is that forgiveness is as noble as it is hard; and very ennobling, because when we have done the hard thing, “its strength passes into us.” The second thing is that we have some strong helps, “shields and bucklers.” If we will be careful not to injure our enemy, not even by speech to do him a harm or to turn others against him, and if to this we will add a good effort to do him a service if it come in our way, not pretentiously, but humbly and seriously and quietly, and will do our best to give trust again so far as may be, we shall find that the fever of the heart will be cooled much and bitter tastes leave the mouth. Also there are reflections which help, much urged by Marcus Aurelius and other stoics; as, that no one can do us a real harm, “because he can not make our ruling faculty worse than it was before,” and that all men are kindred before God, and that soon we all must die, and that if we be ill-treated, either we deserve it and so must take it humbly, or else we deserve it not and then it is not we who are treated in that manner but some other kind of man for whom our enemy mistakes us; and that a wrong done us is an opportunity to act reasonably and kindly, and “if a little oil be spilt or wine stolen, we should say to ourselves ‘This is the price of tranquility and peace—nothing is to be had without cost;’” and that as men are not born wise, but have to become so, we must be patient; and that if we can teach a man the right way, we should do so, but if we can not teach him, we should be meek on that account; and that we should beware of feeling toward the cruel as they do toward others; and many such-like thoughts, which give strength and



reason if we dwell on them, Also let us remember that forgiveness is courage: it is manliness, it is self-conquest, it faces the world calmly and often dares to be misunderstood, which is a noble daring.

"Fear to do base unworthy things is valor;  
If they be done to us, to suffer them  
Is valor too.

\* \* \*

The purpose of an injury—'tis to vex  
And trouble me; now nothing can do that  
To him that's valiant He that is affected  
With the least injury, is less than it.

\* \* \*

The main part  
Of the wrong is our vice of taking it.

\* \* \*

If light wrongs touch me not,  
No more shall great: if not a few, not many."\*

This leads to the beauty of forgiveness, which is the second thought wherewith I end. Much might be said of the fair sweetness of forgiveness, its beautiful grace. But I will speak of only one special beauty of it, which lies in the third and greatest part of it, the bestowing again of trust in outward relationship however the judgment know this to be risk and danger. This peculiar beauty will appear if we attend to the other parts of forgiveness; for victory over anger, though it be a very fair sight and renews a disturbed beauty in the face, as a pool of water after the fretting of a gusty wind comes again to be starred from the sky when the ripples fall, yet this grace of renewal is but passing and quickly over, leaving no image of itself save in memory or in the slow chiseling of the features into patient shapes. Again the penalty being remitted, there is a beauty of mercy, which is also the grace of unselfishness; but this too, belongs to a passing act, and has its moment of conception, and again of act, after which it lives but in the gallery of recollection. But when the judgment is held subject by love, and however it be furnished with misgivings in the mind, is disarmed by love in the behavior, so that the judgment stays, but love ties it up from action—this is a perpetual triumph, every day freshly garlanded—an eminence of the very best thing in us, and therefore, a beauty which passes not, but freshens every instant so long as judgment points one way and love carries our

\* Ben Johnson's "New Inn."



feet another. But this, as I have said, is beauty belonging to dear friendship, not often wise or safe with strangers, for it ought to be the triumph of love and not of heedlessness or slack attention, or ventursomeness or indifference.

But now I say—which is my third thought wherewith to end—that whatever beauty there be in forgiveness, much more beauty is spread by not needing pardon, by giving no offense. I hold it a kind of impiety and a sad folly to jest about “lovers’ quarrels” and the disagreements of friends. Nor know I aught more hurtful than what many say—namely, that such quarrels are needful to “the spice of life,” or that they are the tossings which keep the sea pure, or that they are like the discords which lead again to a harmony the better welcomed and enjoyed. For all these, and others like them, are but misleading figures, very mischievous and contrary to the nature of the heart. It is strange to me that people think so little as to speak thus. For is it not certain that no relation can be just the same after any act as before it? And is it not more lovely to think of the right and do it under stress of temptation, than to repent of the wrong after the stress is over and the hurt has been done? Moreover, it is only the steadiness of a gentle behavior which is good growing weather for crops of joy and peace; for then there are no ravages to clear up, as from a storm, but constant sunshine. What would be thought of a climate which was a perpetual chase of cloud and sun, of storm and pleasantness, of heat and frost, following each other by minutes, so that all living things were broken or shivered at one instant to be fervently heated after a little interval, and then again to be torn and frozen? What would grow in such a climate? Now, no more grows much good in a house where much needs to be forgiven.

Memory has a part in this subject, for the permanence of memory is not to be overlooked. Whatever once is put therein stays forever. And when had will any power over it, either to call it up or to put it down? When we have not thought of something for many years, or for a lifetime, or ages, for aught any one can say, by some association, as I have said before in this discourse, it will leap to the mind as if done but yesterday, or even as if now doing and seen or heard again, and with all the hurt or all the joy that at first it had. It is strange that people

reflect not more on how deeply storms, injuries, vile or sordid things, sink into the soul, and especially into a child's memory. If this be thought of, it is plain there is more loveliness when no forgiveness is needful than when it is granted; nor shall you be able to heal by any entreaty or by any means such a wound of spirit as you may make in an instant in a young creature. I have heard of a little girl who, taking the dead hand of her brother said, "This little hand never struck me." Surely a memory richer and fairer than if she could recall a thousand repentances for blows! When this is not only negative but positive, so that one can say, "These eyes always beamed and showed a peace; these hands always labored for me; these feet were ready with service, and these ears had a merciful sense, full of attention, which is sympathy"—this is a noon of memory to which recollections of repentance are but dim twilight, half dark.

The long sermon is ended. Let us strive unto the doctrine of it. Let us make its truth light. As it is the forgiveness of God that never he was turned away from us, so let us be turning forevermore unto each other. "In love and peace and quiet, go: God's blessing keep us all!"

## FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the Children of God.” Rom. viii 16.

Grand words are these of Paul. They mean that religion grows in the heart by nature, and that God witnesses of himself in the soul. Religion has taken a great step in these times. Once it was conceived as something coming down from above and put into man; but now, as coming up out of man, growing with his growth. At least, so *we* think of Religion, and all the world seems to us surely coming to the same thought. This is a very great change indeed, and very blissful. For if Religion be in and of the heart, and comes of it, then it gathers all men together as into one family, all being at one in the source and nature of religion where it arises, however they may differ in thinking of it when it has arisen. Now if thus by this new thought of Religion, that it is in man by nature and grows with him, not put into him from outside him, men be brought into one great family, then it follows that they must live together with the virtues and the principles of a family. Now these virtues may be summed up in three,—the justice among all the members which leaves each free, and the love which binds all together in fellowship, and the personal goodness of character by which each is a worthy member. These three virtues of the household, and of the family of many households which is mankind, we take for the expression of our new thought of piety — “Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion.” This is the living principle of our church.

What is Freedom in Religion? I ask and answer this question the more gladly because I know not what needs more to be explained than Freedom. For as Freedom is both a very vast power and assured fact, sure to possess the world, it will be, like any great engine or tool, either a waste, if men understand it not, or an injury if they misconceive and misuse it. In these days Freedom is made a party-cry or a war-cry, or a sort of talismanic word as if the mere speaking of it were a magic to open the doors of all happiness and wealth. It is shouted foolishly or madly or revengefully; and many so use it as fairly to unhinge themselves from that axis of order and obedience on which the world turns. It is no little thing therefore to ask, What Freedom is, and especially Freedom in Religion. For if Freedom in Religion be understood, it will be like to sanctify all other freedom with soberness and peace.

Freedom in Religion has three meanings or parts. First, all agree that it means at least so much as this, namely, Independence of any outward dictation or authority in our thinking. It declares that no man, nor men, nor companies of men, nor institutions, nor eras, nor documents, books, writings, can have any commission to settle for a human being what he shall think, or to enforce agreement, if that were possible, with any creed. This right of every person carries a duty with it, as it is the nature of a right to do so. For it is the duty of every man to possess himself. When one has grown to man's stature in body, it is his duty to be a man also in mind. And if this be duty, then the duty is the highest and most sacred in respect to the highest and most sacred things, which are religious truths. To give up our thinking at any command, no matter by what sanction, whether of church or book or miracle or prophet, to let any other do our thinking for us, to take ready-made what we shall believe and to believe it without thinking,—this is the peculiar quality of very early childhood. But when, while still young, the child begins to question and is full of wishes to know reasons and causes, this is no perversion or depravity, but nature at her business of growing. To carry the infantile quality of implicit acceptance into manhood, is to be unfaithful to the highest duty of mind, and to abdicate its crown and royalty. Such an act is abject. It may be that thought is painful and doubts

press hard. What of it? A king must not resign his crown because it is heavy. Nay, though it cut into his brow, he has a duty to his people. So must a man wear the crown of thought, even if it be, like the Master's, a crown of thorns, because he has a duty to the world. This then is the first meaning of Freedom in Religion—that we have title and duty to think.

Secondly, Freedom in Religion means also right and title to utter our thoughts, saying what we think simply and truthfully. For if to give up thought be supine, to give assent against thought or without thought is untruthful. Now here you will see that I touch on the claim of the great church of the ages, which always has demanded and enforced assent. For the church has known that it could not control the realms of thought except through fear, superstition and ignorance; for whenever a man broke through these, then in the invisibility of his mental states, he might think what he would or must, and none could see. Therefore, the church has sought indirect control by teaching that it is the duty of the soul to believe, without inquiry, what the church declares true. In this effort the great church has had much success, for by molding the plastic mind of childhood it has brought up hosts of people in this subjection, which has robbed them of the very stuff and joy of mind. But what if thought go astray by some misfortune, or, as they say, by reason of the natural wickedness of the heart, so that one *can not* believe as the church ordains? “Then,” says the church, “If you *consent* not at heart, still you must *assent* by will; you must say—If I see not this to be true, or even in fact see it false, as I do, yet I know it is true because so the church says, and I assent to it.” Now this is untruthful; for simply it utters with the mouth what is denied in the mind, and declares we believe on authority what we know well we believe not for itself. What then would be the truthful way if we should find ourselves at once venerating an authority or teacher and dissenting from a creed or doctrine thereof? It would be the truthful course to say—I can not believe this thing; it is no question of will, to do as I choose, but of thought, which goes its own way as it must; yet so I venerate the authority and so well I know my own weakness and fallibleness that I will wait, strive and wrestle with this thing; but I can not say with my mouth



that I *assent* till in my heart I do *consent*; and if never I *consent*, then at last I must say this freely, for to me it will be the truth. This, I say, would be the noble way. But against this good way, the church has set itself, for it will have naught but assent with the mouth whatever the mind be thinking. Nay, the church has punished honest speech with chains or the stake, calling it heresy; in which very word the church has branded its act as a hatred of honesty; for heresy means to inquire, and a heretic is but an inquirer or asker after light, who does no more than say he is in the dark and is seeking his way, or, perhaps, that this way or that way looks to him like the right one. The church has forbidden so much as the asking of a question; though in these latter days it has grown wiser, or else perforce has yielded to the spirit abroad, since it can not resist; and which way it is, I know not.

We say, then, that Freedom in Religion, meaning, first, the right and title to think, secondly, carries with it also right and title to speak our thoughts with peace.

Now, thirdly, Freedom in Religion means to be free of ourselves. This is a personal and holy sense of it. It means to stand above ourselves and judge ourselves, till we be free from the insidious bondage of our own prejudice and passion. It involves the keeping of our mind large, open, friendly to thought and hospitable to any question. Who is free if he be enlisted in little wars of passion and creed, in the jealousies of a dogmatic or narrow education which mislead thought or even turn the mind against thinking? Are we free if, having cast off the yoke of foreign dictation, we remain under that of our own prejudice, ignorance or fear? What matter whether we be shackled by an outward authority or by passionate habits of mind?—Nay, but it does matter. For to be slaves of ourselves is the worst slavery. Phillips Brooks has these brave words,—“I dread with all my heart to be the first man who turns away from any old statement of truth, simply out of mere willfulness, simply because it has become monotonous, if it still expresses the truth of our time. But I dread a great deal more to be the last man who stands by an old statement of truth, simply because of its familiarity, if it has ceased to express the real religious life and thoughtfulness of the days in which God has placed us.”



Freedom of ourselves means to be lifted to a calm light. When into this we come, no more we are whirled about by gusts of jealousies, clamorous doctrines, passions, prejudices, opinions. These things befog the mind, shrouding us in a thick, black mist through which we can not find our way to think; nay, in the very thick of the mist they poison the soul as with a sleeping draught or benumbing liquor, so that not even we have a wish to find our way to thought, but sit down by the wayside, content to be wrapt in the indolent fog. But when a man is free of himself in respect of religion, then he is able to clear his way to the truth, because he *will* do it, and he will hold any doctrine for no reason but that he thinks it the truth; and this reason he will hold so sacred that on the first suspicion that he has not the truth, quickly he will examine, search, and test with a free and glowing mind, that he may find the truth wherein alone is rest and power. Fontanelle, when near his death, said, "It is time for me to go, for I have begun to see things as they are,"—a sad reason, indeed, for dying; ay, and a faithless one, not rich with the liberty and the courage of the sons of God. For what can make this life or any life so glorious as to escape from all appearance into reality and begin to see things as they are. For then no more we grope blindly or sit basely in mists of passions, prejudices, conflicts, creeds; but we arise, and being ready to move, Freedom takes us by the hand and leads us out beyond and over the fog-wall, where on a height we have a great expanse of nature before us. What true expanse of nature is not both glorious and awful? Also to be free of ourselves is to be free of fear, which is another splendor of it, a shining, majestic, masterful quality of soul, whereby a man becomes so free of himself that even he thinks not of himself; yes, he thinks no more of what may come to him to-morrow for following the truth than of what he thought yesterday which might keep him from following; but he follows on because his mind works and thinks and leads him to the glory of liberty. He is then a figure like Demosthenes, who counted not the cost to himself, nor so much as looked at it, or if he turned an eye on it straightway looked away with scorn, and said to the Athenians, "My counsels to you are of such nature that sometimes they are not good for me to give, but always are good for you to follow."

This freedom of ourselves, as I have said, is the noblest of all liberty; in truth there is none like it. It is like an eagle whose wings fly in the highest regions, whose talons drag all other liberties after it. For we can both think and speak in freedom of others, if first we be free gloriously of our passions and fears. Samuel Johnson said that, "Political liberty is good only so far as it produces private liberty," which, indeed, is so; and, therefore, the noblest social liberty is that which leads to the most private kind of freedom, and that is freedom within oneself, neither to be caged without motion, nor to be tossed about with furious struggling by our obstinacies or passions, but free to explore for the truth. The man who is tied by himself is two-fold a slave, a slave enslaved by a slave.

Who will arm himself with his passions and plume his head with flaunting creeds to go out to war for the truth? Who will be such a mad man of La Mancha astride a Rosinante? Who will be so impudent as to take on him to protect the truth, and not humbly see rather that it came and converted him from his errors and weakness? Yet everywhere the world is full of the cries and buffetings of men who, not being free of themselves nor living in the calmness and courage of real liberty, don all their passions and go out to take care of the truth; which, reverently I say, is the business of the Almighty Power, who never hath failed in it since first the morning stars sang together. I know not what is more impious than to go about to take care of the truth by any other way than by opening the doors to thought that it may walk and pass everywhere freely. Religious reasoning should be uttered by everyone as calmly as a chemical discovery, and with no more concern that it survive. For however one strive or plot or kill, he can give no thought any more life than it has, and no one is commissioned to protect a thought, but only to give it space. Protect the truth? Take thinking under our patronage? Wall around the truth with men's devices, conventions, priesthoods, creeds and statements? Assemble first to protect Niagara that none shall dam up its waters! Convene to protect Mount Blanc that men shall not lift it away, nor polish its sides with the powered Jungfrau! Sit in congress at the Eddystone to protect the ocean that men drain it not with basins or tap its floor till it run away! Gather

on hill-tops to protect the stars that the little children may not flch the pretty balls for their games! Then when these things be done, sit ye in church, conference or council to protect the truth,—which, if it stand, is like a mountain, or if it move is like a torrent, and goeth all around the earth like the ocean, and liveth above all clouds and cometh out of them like a star.

Freedom in Religion truly is a great trust and faith. It means that we lean on the serene order and perfect power which make for truth and right, and we are filled with courage and joy since we know the truth needs not to be bestead by us, but is hedged by its own divinity, and will show the greater the more daylight is poured on it. Therefore we become large entertainers of thought, ready to search anything both reverently and fearlessly, whether an old sanctity or a new doctrine, dreading not the high air of thought, for it is our home,—“like the bird which, perched on some frail thing, though he feels the branch bend under him, yet sings loudly, knowing well that he has wings.”

The second point in our threefold principle is Fellowship in Religion. If religion be somewhat that is put into man, according to the old thought of it, then it is the same always; but if it spring up out of man, as is the new thought of it, then it will be as different in each case as the men are. But that it springs in all is a greater fact than that, having sprung up, it is found different in many. Wherefore it makes the meeting of man with man to found on that greater fact; and this is Fellowship. “Fellowship in Religion is to bring the brotherhood of man into religion so that the bond of humanity is put above that of creed or church or any other thing. This will teach us not to set bounds anywhere, as to say, We will receive all Christians but not a Jew, or, We will receive all Jews and Christians but no others; but to say as Paul did, that we receive all, being made of one blood and walking under the common sky of the One Creator and Father.”

Fellowship in Religion places the humane relations before doctrinal ones, so that we meet as men however separated we be in thought. This brings into religion the unity of human brotherhood, which is a fact wider than religion. For religion is but one thing which springs in a man by nature; besides which

there are many more, like love, thought, pity, ambition, and many such; as to all which, men are in brotherhood. Now, Fellowship in Religion, since religion is part of the total brotherhood of men, draws sanctity from the brotherhood, and then is of a kind to turn about and touch all other points of brotherhood with a holy fire. It is thus a gentle and right recognition of brotherhood, not only in faith and hope but in thinking over these, whereby we become open to all persons from the side of thought, to compare views both kindly and strictly, and to listen, and to reason together; for as much as we are more at one in seeking the truth than we are two or many by coming at different ends in our search. One man said to another, "I wish to bring a friend to you; I wish him to know you." "Certainly, bring him." "But he thinks very differently from you." "But consider how much more he is like me if he thinks, than unlike me by thinking differently; bring him by all means." Now if the thinking of these men were about religion, then this story shows fellowship in religion, which thus binds man to man when it is known that religion comes up in each by nature.

I said in the beginning that this Fellowship was one of the virtues of the family. This is to say that it is a form of love. For consider how much we all need each other. Sidney Morse says, "We are all alike. This equality is not of merit, nor of greatness; rather of our nothingness; equal we are in God,—in being by our individual selves nothing. Who is great alone? Who is rich alone? Isolation, then, is weakness, poverty, ignorance,—blank and eternal. But in society we are heirs of all there is. You and I and every soul, is thus endowed; we are nothing; we are all the universe holds." What could any one body among you, the proudest, the strongest, do without those other bodies which conspire to clothe, to feed, and protect that one? Or even without those humble living creatures, the blades of grass, the spears of green waving trees, and even the earthworm, whose intimate connection with your being, your muscles and sinews, nature has been working at for ages and ages? And what could any one heart and mind among you, the hardiest and bravest, do without all these others which run into your life with joy and with help forevermore, as "as all the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full?"

But does this Fellowship with men mean lukewarmness for our ideas? Does it imply that we hold our views loosely as of little import to the world, or unearnestly as of little moment to ourselves? Nay, it is the very essence of deep fellowship that we be true and fervent toward our own thoughts, while keeping a large and generous companionship with those who cherish other thoughts. For in what things do we seek fellows? Surely in the things which we value and believe fervently. In these we yearn for companionship. When we believe in religion as a holy fact of the heart, deeper than all creeds or thoughts of it, then we shall reach out on all sides for the dear ties of Fellowship. But how can we be persuaded mightily of the greatness and beauty of the religion which runs in all creeds and goes with all names, unless we be fervent for our own thoughts of it as pure, noble, true and helpful to mankind? But though we be fervent for our own thoughts and seek to teach and spread them because we believe them deeply, yet Fellowship in Religion will make fervor large and beautiful, teaching us not to be shocked or confounded at anything, nor to give anything an ill name, so it be earnest and truthful in purpose, lowly and brave in spirit.

But although this be the way of peace and truth and love, yet it is an old saying that, "God maketh the wrath of man to praise him," and if there had been always a gentle worship and never hatred and cruelty for difference in thinking, where were those great heroisms, those divine sufferings which have fed the world? As a forest of trees may be fostered and fed by the ashes of a few trees, so hath the world flourished on the ashes of martyrs. If always a precious and gentle fellowship had attended religion, then we should have no Eleazar "going immediately to the torment that by manfully changing this life he might show himself such a one as his age required, and leave a notable example to such as be young to die willingly and courageously for honorable and holy laws;" then no Socrates would have stood before the Dikasts saying with a proud voice like the sound which a storm draws from an oak tree, "You may kill me, O Athenians, but you will not soon get another such man to tell you what you ought to do," and afterward among his friends with the simplicity of a child saying, "Yes, you may bury me, where you will, if you can catch me;" then no Paul would have



preached love universal, and withstood the Petrines to the face, and have hurled down division-walls with a voice more terrible than the trumpets at Jericho,—cast out for the same, beaten and left for dead by the wayside, and at last whirled away to heaven by fire and sword, too swiftly for memory to sieze on it; then no Jesus would have been seized, even while yearning toward the people as to sheep without a shepherd, and buffeted, scourged, “crowned with thorns, drenched with gall and nailed to a cross,” while he said to bewailing women, “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children;” then no Confucius would have been driven unto old age from place to place, an outcast and a wanderer, but steadfast and grand, until he was broken and falling like an old tree propped, and ready for the ground; then no Huss, with the gentleness of a lamb and the courage of a lion would have faced quietly a concourse of raging prelates and gone to heaven in the flames ignited from their hearts; then no Savonarola would have preached with a fiery zeal which at last lighted his own pyre; and no Fra Domenico would have braved extremity of torture unflinching for the so glorious truth of such a grand master; then no Latimer and Ridley would have walked to the fagots as to a seat of mighty power, constant but solemnized, the one saying, “Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle in England, by God’s grace, as, I trust, shall never be put out;” then no heroic constancy of gentle women, the old, the weak, the shrinking, would have glorified the earth—such as in the persecutions of the Jews, of the Huguenots, of the Albigensians, as when at the capture of a castle, the commander of the forces of the Church agreed that all the defenders who would abjure their heresy might go out unharmed, and when his bloodthirsty troops murmured at this because they would be deprived of their victims, said to them, “Be not alarmed; I know these heretics; no one will recant,” and, indeed, spoke rightly, for they clung to their faith and were burned, seven scores of them, meeting death and torture with prayers and hymns—names unknown and unsung, but their life not lost, yea, imparted to you and to me! Yes, verily, if Fellowship in Religion always had been in the world, then would these great splendors not have been, nor human heroism risen



almost into divinity. And yet, alas, what pain, what woe, what wrenching of every holy affection, what partings worse than death, what despair and cries and prayers have gone with these glories! Worse than this, what dreadful passions, foaming hatreds, gloating cruelty have turned the rack, whirled the sword, kindled the fagots! These were an army of giants of human frenzies, rages, treacheries and cruelties. They have gone, and as they passed along the highway of the ages they grew smaller; for the giants enlisted early, and afterward smaller people that perchance frothed with as much rage, but had not the power; and they too are gone. If any one in this age join the forces which are against Fellowship in Religion, if he will not reason calmly with his brother, if for honest difference in thought, to what degree soever, he has exiled his brother and drawn away from him, let him know that he is no more than one of some little dwarfs clinging to the rear of the vanishing army of persecutors, hideously distorted of like passions with the giants, but puny and contemptible in limb.

The third point in these primary principles of our Church is Character in Religion. This follows on Freedom and Fellowship. For if a pure idea of Freedom and Fellowship forbid all doctrinal tests and fences, there is nothing left but Character to be the ground of union. What then is Character in Religion? It means that what man *is*, is the supreme matter; not what he says or does in church or elsewhere, nor what be his prayers or hymns or creeds, but what really he *is* in the depths of his heart. Also Character in Religion means that however loud the voice or ready the mouth, the knee and hand, in observance, no man's religion or worship can be better or purer than his soul's deeps. It may be better than he *seems* to be—and this is a blessed fact. Many persons are better deep in the unseen emotions of the heart than ever they seem to others; yea, many who have great and sorrowful faults still have a depth in them of very simple and sincere purity. It is out of these depths that worship springs. But no man can upraise a prayer purer than truly he is himself. Character in Religion gives a firm base on which feeling may build its temple with towers and spires. For emotion in religion may be either a shallow or bad indulgence. It is so when it is based on fear or

desire, or on aught but simple goodness; still more when it is put in the place of character, deemed to atone for bad morals and to serve instead of a good life. This is the burden of the Hebrew prophets, those most stern and sublime of all preachers. In Kuenen's words, "The demands which Jahveh makes upon his people are moral demands. They are continually repeated with the greatest emphasis and earnestness; the transgressions of these commandments by the large majority of Israel, especially by the leaders and men of distinction, is the theme of most of the prophetic addresses. The solemn declaration that Jahveh takes no delight in the noise of feasts is followed in Amos by the order:

'But rather let judgment run down as water,  
And righteous as an ever-flowing stream.'

And Isaiah exhorts:

'Wash you, make you clean,  
Put away the evil of your doing from before mine eyes,  
Cease to do evil, learn to do well,  
Seek judgments, turn away the oppressors,  
Do justice to the fatherless, defend the cause of the widow.'

And no less striking is Micah, who gives the question of the pious Israelite and his own answer in this form:

'Wherewith shall I come before Jahveh,  
And bow myself down before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
With the sacrifices of calves a year old?  
—Will Jahveh be pleased with thousands of rams,  
With ten thousands of rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression,  
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?  
—He hath showed thee, O man, what is good  
And what Jahveh doth require of thee;  
What but to do justly, to love mercy,  
And to walk humbly with thy God?'"

Yes, and the test whether one walk humbly with God in religion is whether he do justly and love mercy in life. Loves he his fellow-beings more? Is he gentler to those under him? more patient with dullness? more forgiving, forbearing and kind, to neighbor, friend, or enemy? more thoughtful of the poor? more generous and unselfish? more careful of another's good name? slow to believe evil? quicker to believe good? more self-sacrificing? more sympathizing? more fair, honest, scrupulous? more noble in aim? less given to riches and pride? less self-in-

dulgent? more thoughtful? more spiritual? more intellectual? more religious? Alas! for the man who works hard six-sevenths of his time to over-reach his neighbor, and sets apart the other seventh to get the better of God, who thinks, "to atone by a decorous pietism for a censorious temper, fawning on God, devouring men."

In a certain ancient time there was a poor man living in a common house in a little town. Yet it was a house as good as most of his neighbors', for the town was a poor place. This house, if you will picture it, was but a square box of stone, with a turf roof, and a latticed window and a door for light—a dim dwelling, no better than a large cell, with no furniture but a few mats, a chest and some water jars; and the room served for kitchen and eating place and sleeping room in one. How often has nature chosen humble origins for great things! So was this common dwelling; for the poor man who lived in it grew to be a great lord, king, and leader of other men's minds, and for a time people gathered around him with songs and shouts of exultation and homage. And this was better than sometimes it is; for he was a noble soul as well as a great leader. Obedience, love, honor and worship were paid to him by his followers, and this the more because he taught them about religion. For when any leader is great enough and good enough to teach men about religion, he is more adored than any other teacher. At last came the time for the great king and leader to be taken away, for none can live forever, and he told his people what was the one supreme, living, everlasting truth of religion, the truth above every truth. And what was this? What great lord coming out of a little hovel, in an obscure city, courted with such submission and love by his followers, and feeling the spirit of power stir in him, might not say to his disciples, "Obey me! Follow my words! Worship my authority and keep the faith which I have given you!" Yet not so spoke this master; but he said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. And many will say to me in my day of triumph, 'Lord, Lord, did we not preach in your name and in your name cast out demons and wrought many miracles in your name?' But I will declare unto them, I never knew

you. Depart from me ye that work iniquity." Honor of him was of no potency, nor any service of him to be counted for them; nay, if they fed not the hungry, and thirsty, took not in the stranger, clothed not the naked, visited not the sick, and went not to them that were in prison, and did not thus unto the least and humblest, then they had a spirit of neglect in their hearts which was the same as neglect of their lord. Nay, so did he set the heart above all, that when he saw a poor woman give the smallest coin, he said, "She hath given riches past all the rich." Thus did this mighty lord, before whom the people shouted; and if they had not shouted the very stones would have cried out. He put away all forms, creeds, names, to sanctify simple goodness in religion.

Now we have looked at Freedom and Fellowship and Character. There is yet the fourth term, Religion. We assert not only Freedom for the mind, Fellowship for the heart, and Character for the conscience, but we assemble all these in Religion. And in this we differ widely from many persons who would take all the other thoughts with us heartily. There are many who applaud liberty; who declare for good and humble fellowship, seeing clearly that it is indeed a part of liberty; who enforce the worth of character both by precept and by high example; but they look at these by themselves, and not assemble them in Religion, and indeed take little thought of religion, or even make light of it. But we say not only Freedom, but Freedom in Religion, and not only Fellowship, but Fellowship in Religion, and not only Character, but Character in Religion. Freedom is one aspect of human rights; Fellowship is one view or field of humane duties; Character respects the sanctity of individual goodness; Religion belongs to them all in our principles and purposes, glorifying them and binding them all together in our church life.

And what is Religion? A vast question which I will not try to answer now. But you all feel well enough for this present purpose what that great word means. Two things I will say about it as related to our church, I mean to our purposes and feelings in here gathering together for help in religious thought and life. The first relates to the *thought* and *feeling* which is religion, the second to the *expression* of it.

As to the thought and feeling which the word Religion enshrines, take this alone at present, that we all find ourselves involved and immersed in Mystery. Whatever else we do, we must wonder. There can be no end of our wonder, our awe-breathing marveling, when we simply look around us and think of the earth, the sky, the creatures. Whatever else we know is as nothing compared to our knowledge of the infinite that it is beyond knowledge, and yet that we live in it and look and wonder. Above in the sky, is mystery, and mystery beyond mystery, farther than eye can sweep, father than the lenses which aid the eye can penetrate that array of suns and systems and stars interlaced rising above each other forever.

"Bethink thee,—

This vast of peopled space of burning suns!  
 If on the pinions of terrific wind,  
 Potent to rend strong oaks, to tear down towers,  
 Tossing their guns like playthings in the air,  
 And twisting huge wrought-iron beams to curls,  
 If on this wind, I say, thou shouldst be borne,  
 Past moon, past sun, to catch a star, how long  
 Would be thy dizzy journey? A hundred years?  
 Yea, and a hundred hundred, and that by  
 A thousand, and that doubled still—yea, more—  
 Riding on the back of a hurricane,  
 To reach the nearest of the gleaming globes  
 That kindle watch-fires in the arch of space,  
 Like beacons set in a cathedral dome.  
 And from that star a great new firmament  
 Of stars thou wouldst behold, worlds on worlds rolling  
 Upon thy vision, here invisible,  
 Strange constellations of shining creatures  
 Sketching their mythic pictures on new skies,  
 Red orbs and fiery nebulae, weird planets  
 Stranger than Saturn, and fierce, hairy comets.  
 And if upon that star thou shouldst out-single  
 The faintest gleam of light, and leap to it,  
 Another firmament would rise before thee,  
 With worlds piled to the zenith, And so following,  
 Forever and forever and forever,  
 And still forever multiplied forever.

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Truly, compared with the infinitude  
 Which hath no end on either hand, or up,  
 Or down, this system of huge worlds, their moons,  
 And monstrous sun binding them all together,  
 Are but as fine dust, cast by a man's hand  
 Into the sky."

But not only in this infinite realm, star-peopled, do we confront the holy and inevitable mystery. This fond earth trembles with the life of the heavens. It is a star swimming in immensity, and we go swimming with it, and hence know the



special wonders of its bosom, at least in some little part. Wherever we turn our eyes, to our feet, or around us, or over some stretch of mountain, vale, ocean,—a bit, a mole, a bubble compared to the depths of starry space,—is wonder and awe, and awe and wonder, inseparable forever.

“ The mollusk and the polyp,  
The diatoms, whose thin silicious skins  
Deposit deep beds of white, shining sand,  
And hosts of strange and living little creatures  
In water, earth, or air,—these are the dust’s dust:  
Yea, and on this imperious rolling ball,  
What is man’s body but a grain or mote?  
And yet how spins the earth unhazarded,  
And singing on its way serenely roves  
Around the sun; how prompt the seasons are,  
How full of lucious juices and sweet waters!  
How lordly planets make their grave obeisance  
Unto the central king, revolving round him  
And glowing in his light so vividly  
That they may be descried by day, not hidden  
Even by the sun’s prodigious beam! How softly  
And faithfully the moons attend their worlds,  
Reflecting the sun’s smile over the shoulder  
Of night when that brown nurse bids day begone  
And frowns upon the too indulgent light!  
How man’s body thrives, and the little insects,  
And zoophytes rooted like plants—how all  
Flourish and swarm, momentous to the Power  
That throws a comet, sets a sun aflame,  
And squeezes nebulæ till worlds ooze out.  
Before Almightyness, the whole is naught!  
But to All-lovingness the polyp’s hunger  
Cries, and the beast’s pangs in his barren den.”

But after searching the starry spaces and this earth, yet hardly we have begun to wonder, we have stepped but on the threshold of marveling, we but totter as a babe in the portico of astonishment. Amazement, admiration, prodigy, miracle are yet to come. Bow thy head now in admiration, while thou lookest into the ineffable depth and spectacle of thyself. Forth comes a thought; what is it? whence? It sweeps the heavens with one sense and the earth with all senses; what are these marvels of senses which brush from the skies and gather from the earth the foods of thought and the materials of meditation? Whence these ecstasies, the pains, the fears, the sacrifices of love? Out of what depths comes heroisms? Out of what element in imperfection leaps the thought of the perfect? Whence in our bondage the dream of freedom, greater than the eagle’s flight? Whence in death’s presence the thought of the deathless? How come the mighty leap to immortal hopes, and thoughts of



things to which no senses pierce? Thus, with wonder, I wonder at myself. What am I? How came I? What are these reports in me? What are these marvels that keep rising in me and declare themselves to have become myself?

And if I can not tell, if I can only lose myself in the infinite, if the skies and the earth, and I who see both and walk on one, are all together miracles, and fellows in marvels, majesties, auguries, auspices, beyond all reach of word and thought,—what shall I say of me, an infinite mystery to myself, looking out on these infinite depths of mystery? Is this not the mystery recognizing the mystery, the marvels of thought and love knowing themselves again? Is not my wonder at all things a going out towards somewhat like itself of that somewhat in me, —that which indeed is I, yet which I know not, but stand wondering in my wonder-self? Yes, so it is. I could not marvel at the heavenly deeps if I had them not in me; I could not wonder at all this “pomp and garniture” of life if I were not of the life. Marcus Aurelius says,—“Reverence that which is best in the universe, and this is that which makes use of all things and directs all things; and in like manner also reverence that which is best in thyself; and *this is of the same kind as that.*” Tauler writes,—“St. Bernard says, ‘Why does my eye perceive the heavens, and not my feet. Because my eye is more like the heavens than my feet.’ Thus if my soul is to perceive God, it must be heavenly.” Religion appears as love, because in the infinite I may behold my kindred, my stock, my source, my own look and likeness, and so say,—I am of thee; Thou, O Infinite Life, and Love and Power, art my source of living, of loving, of doing.—This is faith! This is prayer!

Now, again, this thought and feeling of religion we wish to express. It is natural to strive to utter it, if only we speak few words and be not too bold for the spirit’s reverence. Expression of our religious thought and feeling is worship. For this we meet together and in simple forms strive to speak the unspeakable and give voice to our praise and joy; also to our needs and struggles. We come not to beg or beseech anything with loud entreaties and many appeals; but only to witness with a hushed and solemn reverence the truth of an unutterable relation. Because it can not be uttered, after we have done our best we shall

still be far from saying it, and in our words will lie some partiality, incompleteness, falseness; but it is more true and draws nearer the holy mystery to speak it as well as we can than not to utter it at all. The savage who is bowing fearfully before his grim idol has more of the truth of the heavens in his incantations than is in the bold march of a man who with bonneted head walks under the stars acknowledging no Infinite Life to claim his loving worship, and thinking of himself only as a worm's meat.

But worship should have a beautiful quality which I know not how better to name than noble reticence, a delicacy of feeling, an utterance which suggests much but shrinks from much more. By lack of this, some kinds of worship err sadly. They tear away that

"Sweet self-privacy in a right soul"

which

"Outruns the earth and lines the utmost pole."

Yet striving after exalted expression helps true feelings. Also, by the direction of thought and by stillness, we can do something to prepare and garnish the mind's room for worship. We ought to come with peace and reverence, suiting our behavior to the sacred purpose of the place and hour. Surely this is an hour blessed for its escape from the prodigious interests and cares of the toiling world, from the whirl and the struggle, the fever, the ambition. For a brief space—too brief if we use it well and know its joyfulness—let us cast these daily things behind us, or climb above them, like a man standing on a high hill, who looks far over the earth and into the heavens, and awe is in his face.

Now we have these three,—Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion; whereby Religion makes a man, first, face himself strictly in Character; then his neighbor with love in Fellowship; then join with all for that justice among all and that grace in each which is Freedom.

## “THE NATURAL MAN.”

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“The Natural Man.” 1 Cor. II. 14.

I propose a sermon of definition. I ask you to be willing to think with me this morning, even if at first it seem somewhat dryly or barrenly. For it is good often to clear our minds and take a fresh clear view from a space set in order, refreshed, swept of collections, heaps, obstructions. To understand well the word natural, and to conceive it precisely, is a prime matter, because it enters into so many thoughts. Indeed, the word is in regard to thoughts, as Palissy found wood to be in respect of the arts. The heroic potter set himself to write down the arts in which wood was needful in some way, but after a while he ceased writing because he could think of no art at all in which wood was not needful. In like manner it were hard to find any thought of which it may not be asked whether it be natural or unnatural, or in some way the word is not used.

The word natural has much to do in our theological systems, in our religious reasonings. What is nature? What is natural? Is what is natural good or bad? Is true religion natural and universal, or unnatural and given only to a few by revelation? Are sin and wrong natural or unnatural? If natural how then wrong? if unnatural, how can they exist? Is goodness natural or unnatural? If natural, why not constant, continual? if unnatural, why do we find it at all? These, and like questions bear no little part in our daily hard points of thinking, yes, and of acting too. I shall try to reason now of what we ought to mean by nature and natural if we use these terms carefully in religion.

Natural has different meanings as is the way with words, according to the connections and context. Even when used in

theology, it by no means has one simple meaning. In truth it has bred much misunderstanding and confusion by its many different senses. Therefore it is a main point to understand the word natural well and present it to our minds precisely, as I have said; which best may be done, by taking its various meanings, one after another, since like many words, and they some of the greatest, it covers a large space, like the atmosphere or water. I will treat of its meanings, if indeed I can gather them all, in order:—

1. Natural means material, concerning, or pertaining to, or existing in, the realms of material splendors. By nature we may mean the earth and the heavens. In this sense we speak of the loveliness, peacefulness, grandeur, sublimity of nature. To love nature, is gladness and rejoicing in the beauty of hill and dale, meadow, tree, sunlight, moonlight, starlight, music of the brook and breeze, and whatever other of all the rich beauties of nature comes before us. Science having to do with this material panoply we call natural history, natural philosophy. Nature in this sense is conceived to be set opposite a realm of mind, a spiritual creation or universe, different in substance and laws from the natural. Thus in our version of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

2. Nature is used in a wider sense to embrace not only the material part but the whole universe, heaven and earth, physical and spiritual, conceived as one glory. Thus we speak of the "nature of things," meaning far more than the nature of physical objects. We think then of the constitution, character, aim, drift, method and essence of "*all that is.*" That is natural, thereupon, which accords with the "nature of things."

3. Natural means unfolding in or forming part of the visible system of things which seems impersonal. Thus, a tree is natural; the box made of its wood is artificial or manufactured. The motions of heavenly bodies are natural; dances or eccentric wheels are inventions. Manners may be natural, as opposed to acquired behavior or conventional forms.

4. Natural means inherent in a being by constitution. That is natural to anything which it has by virtue of its very

being and character. In this sense we speak of "*natural religion*," meaning that the instinct of worship belongs to the human soul, a part of its endowment, character, definition. It is natural to human beings to nourish and protect their young, but natural to other species to forsake them. Each acts as his constitution is, that is naturally. Similar use we have in such phrases as a natural speaker, a natural musician, singer or other artist, meaning those whose virtue in their art comes of endowment, and has bloomed, as it were, without instruction.

5. Natural signifies inferred from nature, reasoned from the observed facts of the universe. It was in this sense that a distinction formerly was much in vogue between natural theology, as it was called, and revealed religion. Natural theology was thought to be what reason could come at by itself, but revealed religion signified those doctrines not to be found by the mind of itself in the study of things, and, therefore, put into the mind in some way by power.

6. Observation has revealed unvarying form in the conduct of things, in all parts of the universe which can be studied. All things move in unbroken order, exact successions, periodic times. There is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning," no exception or chance found, where the conditions are simple enough to be stated in precise terms. Natural, therefore, means according to this invariable order, a due succession of events according to that assemblage and induction of facts which is called law; opposed to supernatural or miraculous, which imply intervention and change in the usual order, by a power over it, as we say, rather than in it.

7. Natural means (and surely this is a strange sense of it) degraded, depraved, in all degrees of moral ill; wicked, guilty, rebellious, vile, ungrateful, impious, or only unregenerate, unrenewed, unconverted, erring, weak in will, bad but without guilt. Thus theologians speak of the natural heart, the natural desires of the heart, the "natural man." It is in the milder of these senses that the word rendered natural seems to be used by Paul. But it ought not so to be translated. It refers simply to certain powers or faculties of man's being, not touching the question whether these powers be all that is natural, and to be called man's nature, or whether there be also other powers and tendencies in him. I



must suspect that this is one of the cases, though they be very few, in which the English translators guided themselves as much by the church theology as by the Greek. The word elsewhere is rendered "sensual,"\* which comes nearer its meaning, but is too strong. "Senouous" would be better; yet that is too limited. The word means that part of human nature which the brutes have in common with men, including the appetites, many desires, tendencies, feelings, emotions, pleasures, emulations, memories, fear, affection. According to Paul's doctrine, the man who lives mainly in this part of his nature and out of that part which is the crown of humanity, the spiritual, whereby he communes with God, can not know things of God because, they are spiritually discerned. They must be taught him by the spirit of God communing with him and inspiring him. Paul puts not the lower under a ban, as wicked or depraved; but he says there is a higher, and it is the higher alone that can discourse of God. Yet, though this inferior nature be not depraved in itself, in its own place, there is moral disorder in living in it mainly; hence there is a measure of shame and reproach often united to the word in the New Testament, as is plain in the passage in James, "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but, is earthly, sensual, devilish." The Revisers retain the word "sensual" herein, but in a note they say, "or natural, or animal."

8. Now, finally, I come to the last meaning of the word natural, for if there be any more I have not been able to gather them; and I hope truly that I have collected them all, because this last which now I have to set forth, I think a high and grand meaning of the word. Yes, and greater much than any of the others which I have gathered. And this last and great meaning of the word I think is very needful in our reasoning and will lead to happy conclusions. I think it a shame that this word of Paul's should be translated "*at all*,"—that moral worthlessness or ruin should be called the "natural man." For I would enforce another meaning of natural, which casts not down, but lifts up; a meaning which would make natural religion the same with pure worship, natural theology one with simple truth; a sense by which nature becomes a sacred promise, an infinite enthusiasm; a meaning free from all littleness, very grand and

\* James III., 15: Jude 19.



inspiring. But, you will say, can any meaning of nature be greater than one previously mentioned, the sense which includes "all that is" in the idea of nature, and defines natural by "the nature of things." Yes, for that sense might be limited to "the nature of things" *as they now appear*; while it belongs to the meaning which I speak of now that it looks to tendency, not conditions; scorns delay amid actual instances; pierces from appearance to inward meaning; interprets experience by prophecy, and sets the eye infinitely aloft. This meaning of natural, which now I speak of, is the IDEAL, which is to say, whatever goal things are striving toward, what a being tends to; by which I mean its ideal aim or destiny written or reported in its dreams or visions, above its state or accomplishment at this moment; the invisible model, path, line, end, hope, promise, and justification of a creature; all which is gathered in the philosophic expression, the *summum bonum* of the creature. By this meaning of the word natural, that is natural to a being which agrees, not with the present state of him, but with the nature wrought and writ in the creature's class or kind, and in the situation or environment (which is the philosophic term in vogue), and pushing its way to the light and into fact, however it be dim or far or slow.

Like other words, nature will have its varied popular usage. Well enough it may signify the material world, its laws, its spontaneous growths; and so with the other meanings of it. But in religion I think there should be only one meaning of nature, *viz.*, the *tendency*, the *end*, the *ideal*. We should drop the old terms, "natural" and revealed." They are confusion. For natural religion is the ideal character, life, uplift of soul unto God; natural theology is the ideal belief, or the truth, whenever it be found. And we should put away the shame of sealing with the image of nature the weakness or wickedness of man.

In all moral and religious reasonings, I say, I halt not at saying plainly that this should be the meaning of natural, to wit, the tendency, the end, the ideal of things; for which I find plain warrant in the very import of the word by its origin. For it comes not only, as well has been said, from the Latin *mascor*, to be born, but from the future participle thereof, and means not now being but about to be, or to come forth in the future. Now

we have in English three words which have come from the same root and mean three kinds of naturalness in three times. One is the word *nascent*, which means the nature or quality of anything in its beginning or arising, this, being the first of the three times. The next is *natal*, which signifies that now the being is here, or the thing is done before us, and refers to the second of the three times. Thus we speak of a natal day; and even we have the word *natals*, meaning events, time, place and the like, of one's birth—though this is an old and rare word. The third word is the one which now I treat of, namely, *natural*, meaning neither the beginning nor the present, but the last of the three times, to wit, what comes in the future, and is put forth in the unfolding of the creature by the ideal unfolded. Wherefore I dwell much on this last and greatest sum of the meaning of nature and natural, that it casts itself into the future, which is into the infinite, and remembers that however we can look back but a little, we can look forward without end; and plants therein its significance, which is the ideal, the drift, and the aim of the creature in endless time, and not what now he is in poverty and after but a little stretch or period of his existence.

If this sense, the ideal, be the just and the highest to give to nature, and if we use it fairly in religious reasoning, I think it will lead to some happy conclusions, as I have said. We shall find much comfort and help, if I mistake not, in some thoughts and reasonings which, even with all helps, this and every other, still are difficult. One of these subjects is the ancient problem, namely, evil, which always has been a very hard fact for religion to face; and many persons, indeed, never have known how to face it with religion, but have cast off religion because it could not face it. But now, unless sadly I mistake, this definition of natural, that it is the ideal, will bring us up to face with courage all the hard facts. Nay, we shall not be frightened or confounded, I think, when we are asked what we shall do in our thoughts with the evil of the world, with the cruelty, violence, fraud, intemperance, disease, and all the bitter miseries that grow from these rank soils. How, says one, can these things be if God reigns and is good? Then answers one: There is no God and no good, and things come of evil. But no, says another, God is, and is good, but the miseries are made by

the devil and his angels. But then up starts reason with a frown to ask whence came the devil, who is the worst evil of all; and belike, then, he who reasons avers that all the evil is but a smoke, or haze, or mirage, and, in truth, is but good unperceived by our short vision. But I know not what to say of this assertion but that it confounds all my observation, as if a man were to assure me, as a piece of piety, that what plainly I see I see not. For surely I do behold great evils, horrible cruelties, and vile selfishness; and I know not how, when I stand by them, to cozen my mind with fond notions of a sheep performing in a wolf's skin; and, indeed, if so I thought, I should deem the performance itself an ill. Well, then, say I, let evil be admitted and pile it up as you will; for neither the fact of it nor the size of it shake me, save as problems which tax me but leave my heart serene, however I come out in my understanding. For the one grave question is, is evil natural? To which I answer that surely it is according to one sense; for I plainly perceive it here present. But that it is natural in that sense, what more is this than to say in another way that it exists? But is evil natural in the sense of ideal? Does it start forth in the future as a prophecy, like as now it appears as a fact? Has it life in the aim of things? If not, then the hard things and crimes, whatsoever they be, are not essential; by which I mean of the essence of life and of things. Wherefore in a right sense they are not natural, but unnatural. Now this, I will be bold to say, is the truth; and it grows into me at each shoulder till it becomes wings, lifting me above the pangs of the evils; for where can I find then a shadow on the future? The divine march of things doth not idealize evil. We may rise in worship, like the lark in the morning, bearing on our breast the dews of earth because first they are heavenly drops. We may adore still the Holy Spirit whose revealed ideal suffers no shadow of wrong; and the problem that now the wrong is here, is set where it belongs, I mean in the province of natural history, like society and language, which, for aught I can say, as little are to be explained. We gain

"Fresh power to commune with the invisible world,  
And hear the mighty stream of tendency  
Uttering for elevation of our thought,  
A clear sonorous voice."

If now we look at humanity and consider the right way to define it, I must think it will be very plain that this meaning of natural, to wit, the ideal, is just. For, What is human nature? or to take the Apostle's strong phrase, What is "the natural man?" Shall we give example of it, which is the same as to define it, by the savage, the Malay, the Fuegian—are these the natural man? Plainly yes, in one sense, being no magical creatures, but well known facts in nature. But if they be the "natural man" in any other sense than as being now actual in some places, I know not in what sense. For why should we define, or with what justice circumscribe, as wisely a good philosopher has said, by the inferior limit? Nay, not only by the lower boundary, but by the smallest number also? And it were strange, moreover, to call the good and the great unnatural men, or even, if so I may say, not more natural than the unwrought and rude types. Well, then, shall we define the natural man by the average? Which is to say, shall we aver a standard on either side of which human nature fluctuates, which standard is found by taking the average of the race, this average being the "natural man?" But what more does this than show man's present state, not his nature? I see not but the moral variation which lies in the notion of an average, shows plainly that human nature and human condition are not the same always, and if man may vary on one or the other side of the standard, what proof that this line, or the standard itself, measures the natural man? And, again, it were strange to say that the most glorious men have exceeded nature and outgrown man. Finally, then, shall we define humanity by the most glorious examples thereof, and even still more by the prophecy of the unfolding of the race? This I am ready to say is the only just meaning of the "natural man;" which is but to say, as a good philosopher has said, that we are to expound and define by the "superior limit;" meaning that we must describe anything by all that possibly or ever it can contain, rather than by the least that ever it did contain.

Of all that we behold within humanity, the greatest and noblest alone should be accepted as revealers of human nature, casting the shadow of the "natural man." Ask what humanity is in this present time and stage of it, and I can give you for answer items and tables of statistics. Ask me what humanity is by *nature*, and I

must point to Jesus and other glorious names as the only visible measure; ay, and the to unnamed faithful who fill the earth, thank God, as stars crowd the sky. And the whole race confirms this judgment by its homage. How it takes into its heart the beautiful and good! How it loves and worships them! How it gazes up at them with heart and soul ablaze! With what tender gratitude and religious reverence it speaks their names. I think we could not so reverence noble persons, unless deep in us lay the self-same nature, ready to be moved and thrilled at sight of the "natural man." What mankind really worships in adoring the great and true, is its own inestimable being. We love the noblest sons of men because they reveal ourselves and "keep us in mind of our own nature."

I have said the highest and best are the only just *visible* definition of "the natural man." But is "the natural man" actual and visible? Can he be? Do the great and good seem to themselves to have compassed the ideal humanity? No; profound humility and everlasting aspiration are the conditions of their exaltation. Still stretch out the heavens infinite; no height can destroy their arc. The greatest and purest beings know that life is forever beginning, the ideal vanishing in the divine bosom that we may follow unto him. The noble and the exalted always speak of aspirations covering them with a clouded glory, and tell us of sublime heights which "eye hath not seen." If to this witnessing we add the lessons of human progress, the unfolding of reason and the moral sense, the height and depth of divine holiness and mystery into which we grow evermore, the principle of life carrying immortality into experience in measure as truly we live,—we see that "the natural man" is unknown, hidden, "invisible and dim" in God. The natural man is realized *as action* in everlasting aspiration and deepening living; but as attainment, never realized; otherwise action could not be everlasting, and life would sink in death. Here, therefore, definition is impossible, because all limits vanish. The natural man is the resident and indwelling life of God.





## BURDEN-BEARING.

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“Bear ye one another’s burdens” Gal. vi. 2.

“Each man shall bear his own burden.” Gal. vi. 5.

Here seems a strange contrast. We are bidden to bear burdens for each other; yet every man is bidden to bear his own.

And indeed, at first, this seems a mere speaking back and forth, first one way, then contrariwise in the next breath. Yet the two precepts together raise an expectancy, a glimpse or break, of the philosophy of burden-bearing. For it is plain the whole truth of the bearing of burdens must be in two parts or questions,—What is our duty regarding our own burdens? and, What rests on us regarding other persons’ burdens? Now, mayhap the answers to these questions, which is to say, the philosophy of burdens and the right bearing and sharing of them, lie in these two precepts of the wonderful Apostle, hung up by him opposite each other as if balanced on a beam. Yes, so I think it is. This is clearer still in the context of the two sayings, the few words that go before them and stand between them, wherein, if I mistake not, the eye of Paul has seen down to the bed of this subject of the bearing of burdens. This I can make plain by a free paraphrase of the passage from the first to the fifth verses,—free as to language and expansion; but close to the Apostle’s meaning and within the walls of his intent. Thus it is: Brethren if any of you fall into any evil deed, or if he fall into a mere outward observance and mistake it for true faith, then you who are in stronger spiritual state must help such a one up and restore him. But see that ye do it with meekness, not presuming over your brother nor vaunting yourselves, but remembering that you too may be tempted. To fulfil the law of Christ, bear one another’s burdens in this spirit. For if a man be puffed up, self-righteous, complacent, censorious, he

thinks himself more than he is; nay, with such a spirit he becomes nothing and is deceived in himself. But what then? While a man admonishes another, shall he himself be falling? Or shall he lean on another, willingly weak and lame, waiting like a beggar to be lifted up, and crying to have his burden borne for him? No; let each man prove his own work, look to his own duties well, carry his own burden manfully, and then what glory he hath shall be of himself and not by reason of his neighbor. For each man ought to bear his own burden.

Now, herein I find three principles set forth which hold folded up in them the whole truth and argument of the bearing of burdens. These are, 1. That a man must bear his own burdens; 2. That each must bear the others burdens; 3. That this latter duty must be done with meekness of manner and of mind.

Now, with these three principles in mind, let us explore the nature of burdens, to see whether these three principles will not guide us well in dealing with burdens. This we can do by asking three questions about every kind of burden—

1. How much ought a man to bear this kind wholly by himself and hide it in his own heart?

2. How much ought the friend or neighbor to bear this kind for his friend or neighbor, or with him?

3. In what way or manner ought one to offer or try to help bear another's burden of this kind?

When we inquire of the nature of burdens, we see, on the first look at them, that they fall apart into two orders or divisions—

1. Secret burdens, hidden in the mind, not to be known by others unless disclosed purposely.

2. Open and plain burdens, visible to every one, not to be hidden howsoever we may wish.

Of these I will speak in turn. First of the open and manifest burdens, which we can not hide if we will.

These open burdens are of many kinds, and varied in weight. Some are very heavy, some light; some are noble, worthy, some slight and trifling. For examples—Any failure of our endeavors. When we have put forth effort, 'tis not without desire; if we fail of the object, the mishap is a burden that weighs on us in measure as the desire was keen. Sometimes if the effort be public, the

mortification of defeat in it is a heavy burden, hung on the burden of the failure to gain the object. Another kind of open burden is a general failure, a hard or dependent lot, poverty, privations, cramped and hard-bound conditions, struggling fortunes. Another kind is bereavement, loss of friends by death or by unfaithfulness, parting with children, breaking of heart-entwining ties. Another kind of visible burden, is blemish of body, deformity, any unsightliness, lameness, lack or loss of members, sickness, weakness, blindness, deafness.

Of these open and manifest burdens, these loads sometimes so heavy, now we will ask the three questions which I have set forth.

The first question is,—How much ought a man to bear these burdens for himself? I answer,

1. As much as he can; and this is done,
2. By not complaining; either in words, or in countenance.
3. By not sinking down, but manfully bearing up.

Is there ought more unmanly, unwomanly, more low-born, ill-bred, lout-like, than the habit of complaining? I pass over now its impiety, of which I have spoken often heretofore. To complain is to hurl words against the holy skies, to pelt the heavens with balls made of the commonest clay in us wet with the oozings from a sick heart. It is to lay our unreverent hand on an altar and shake it; to press with a bold noise into a sacred place; to jangle, bay and jar in the heavenly quiet which is eternal; to bristle brazenly before the holy order which is the presence of God. This I pass over now, to say only how rude, unmannerly, lumpish, vulgar, ill-made, it is to be full of complaints, how ill-favored and unseemly it is, graceless, un-robed, ungentleman-like. For surely it is plain that a man ought to bear his own load as much as he can, and bravely, without groaning and crying out about it. To complain is to be beggarly, whining out that we can not carry our burden and begging some one to help us up with it; nay, it is a kind of robbery, because it unloads from our own shoulders to another man's, whether he will or not, and seizes him to be driven under our burden however thus he be spoiled of time and strength. Oh! that one could picture as bright as it is, the dignity, worthiness of a man's bearing his

own burden as much as he can; and the countenance as dark as it is, of a man's laying his burden heavily and ruthlessly on another by the unmanly way of complaining! For there is no so heavy way of being loaded with a burden as of listening to the complaints, cries and groans of a man who must carry it; and there is no air to dwell in more ill to breathe, more spoiled of life and health, more vented in with ill odors till it is uncleanly, than this air of complaining. There is no dignity or worth in our lot, nor any act that is like a man, but to lift up our burden with a good silence and carry it alone as much as we can.

And if a man should not discharge complaints and cries at his mouth, much more should he not do so all over his face. To be silent, indeed, but to wear a down-cast look, a moody brow, a sour face, is but to relieve our neighbor's ears to discomfort his eye, and to multiply the tongue's distemper by all the features. Simple good cheer in the face and quiet silence in the tongue—this is the first way to bear our own burden as much as we can.

The next way is, not to give up, not to sink down, never to despair; but if we fall, to rise again, manfully to bear up; and if it be heavy, to try the harder, doing to its best what we can do under the conditions. The best a man can do under the conditions is all God hath for him to do.

But you will say to me, Perhaps he himself has made bad conditions; then is he not answerable still for what he might have done if he had kept the conditions good? No. He will lose just so much; he can not escape the penalty; but he is not answerable at any moment for more than at that instant is in his power. That more might have been in his power if he had done well in foregoing moments, counts not against him to load him with duty at this moment. If he have made bad conditions for himself, still, they have been taken into God's Almighty Providence and are now like to some lot he is placed in, like to a field or portion of nature in which he must labor; and the best he can do in those conditions is all his duty, day unto day. Some of the conditions he may remedy, perhaps. This, then, is hope and relief. Some of them he can not mend in this world but must strain under them always. Then there is dignity and labor for him, the bearing of his own load *all he can*.

It is right that we should go sometimes to lay ourselves on a friend's heart. Heaven forbid that I should throw away the precious value of friendship, the confessional of love, the resources of sympathy. Heaven forbid that I should relieve love of its cost and price; for no man can be my friend but at the cost of knowing my griefs and warming my pains in his own bosom. But this is not complaining. Yet even this is to be done with a noble reserve and in a high way, lest it become complaining. For a noble sympathy and a brave, hardy fellowship under burdens, is the very food of love; but to give complaints and grumblings back and forth is to exchange poisons.

Now comes the second question regarding the open and visible burdens—How much ought the friend or neighbor to bear this kind for his friend or neighbor, or with him? I answer as before, As much as he can. This kind of load, that which is open and manifest, not secret in the soul but plain to sight in circumstances and affairs, this kind, I say, is to be borne by each for the other as much as we can. That is, we must lighten the burden all we can for one another. For these burdens can not be hidden. Sickness, injuries, losses, failures, struggles on which fortune smiles not,—these things stand forth to view. Therefore there is no intrusion, no shock, invasion, breaking in on a delicate privacy, when we approach to bear one another's burdens in these plain and public points. Also these are matters in which we *can* bear burdens for each other. It is possible always, because the loads are outward and circumstantial. We *can* apply our hand, we *can* give aid, we *can* reason, counsel, cheer, point the way, smooth the path, find the place, sooth the smart or failure, say the good word in time, awake hope, feed friendship, rescue, warn, second, sustain. Now these things we must do as much as we can. *There is no other limit.* We are bound to take up these burdens for one another as much as we can; not as much as may be easy, with little effort, with no sacrifice; or as we happen to be moved; but as much as we can. We owe burden-bearing to each other with no limit save the end of the burden or the end of our power. This is the fine truth. This is the law and the health of the family of God.

But here, it may be, two questions arise. You will ask what the right limit of our power is, which is the same as to ask



what amount of sacrifice we ought to make. I answer,—If you wish truly to know, you will know. If with single eye and pure heart and unmixed longing for the right way, you apply yourself to each instance, to learn your duty in it, you will be able to see well, to know the measure of your duty, and to discern how one thing bears on another, because you will be looking at the things clearly and not in the fogs of your selfish interests. By this purity of heart you will know what you can do justly. The one point is to attain to this purity; that is, to fix the principle and the wish to do as much as we can.

The second question that may arise is, If a man will not bear his own burdens at all, but shifts them off and lets them fall on others, what then is the duty of others as to bearing his burdens for him? The answer is found in the principle first laid down, namely, that a man should bear his own burdens as much as he can. Now if each one bear his own as much as he can, and we also bear one another's as much as we can, then each bears just the righteous measure. This is a part of the beautiful balance of nature, the usefulness of all to one and of one to all. But if one will not bear his own part, which part is as much as he can, then an unrighteous part is laid on another. Now we ought not to bear an unrighteous load; and soon, if many be piled on us, we can not. Therefore if a man desert his post, unshoulder his own burden, be lazy, shifty, poaching, feigning, extorting, parasitical, then no one should bear his burdens for him, but leave him to the discipline of them; for that is justice and necessity, and nature's way to whip him again to the front till he learn to be a man.

In respect, finally, of these open and manifest burdens, I come to the last of those three questions which lead us, I think, to Nature's truth as to burden-bearing. That question is,—In what way or manner ought one to offer or try to help bear another's burdens of this kind? I answer—

1. By a meek way, a simple purity of heart, as the great apostle says,—“Restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, looking to thyself lest thou also be tempted.” To bear another's burden with him we must go to him humbly and very respectfully at heart; in simplicity, with no flush of self-praise, no manner as if in a higher and better place than he has. Then with



this simplicity of heart, neither seeking praise nor giving itself any, we shall have a divinity of power to bear burdens for one another. But if we go proudly and in a lordly way, consequential, vainglorious, self-admiring, we can help not a jot; for we shall give a stab in the heart by our pretensions worse than the rents we may mend in the garments by our ability. Only a perfectly pure humility can give great and true help.

2. We can bear one another's burdens sometimes by the delicate way of not seeming to see them. A pure heart will know easily when this way is a good way. There are loads which lose much of their weight when our fellows have no eyes for them; such burdens as many kinds of sickness, injuries or blemishes of body, humble position, dependence, narrow and cramped means of life, mortifications, disappointments, sometimes slanders and treacheries, presumptions and impudences. 'Tis a very delicate and lovely fellow burden-bearing in many such things to conduct ourselves in simple good faith and fresh good cheer, just as if they were not so. And the simple, pure heart, I say, will have a divine guidance to know when this will be helpful and upholding.

3. We may bear one another's burdens (a common truth, yet how often forgotten) by seeing them exceedingly well, which means plainly and with sympathy; by kind and constant ministrations in the burdensome points; by generosity, devotion, long and steady help, unremitting friendship, counseling and planning, standing by bravely,—all the supports which heart, head, hand and store can give, showing "the friend in need the friend indeed."

To this point, now, we have come regarding burdens which are open and visible—that a man should bear his own burdens as much as he can, which means that he must not impose them on others; and that we should all bear one another's burdens as much as we can, which means that we must not wait for them to be imposed on us, but take them up freely. And the stress is on the words "as much as we can;" and if we have sincere desire to do as much as we can, we shall have a divine power to judge well, learn much, and see the bearing of one thing on another, and know what we can do. And, finally, the helping to bear another's burden can be done only with simple, pure humility of soul.

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So far I have spoken of the open burdens visible to the world. Now I come to secret burdens, in the mind, invisible, not to be known by others unless he whose burdens they are divulge them.

These secret burdens divide into burdens relating to—

1. The Past.
2. The Present.
3. The Future.

Each of these three classes is affected by different laws and relations.

First, we will look at the burdens relating to the Past. These must be burdens of memory, and burdens of memory can be only moral burdens. For naught can load the memory forever but some kind of sin. It is one of the blessed facts of the soul that memory can bring back pain only in small part and dimly. We can remember that we suffered anguish, but we can not again remember it with the like anguish. Memory will hang in its homestead no pictures of pain; but in all the halls and chambers it will hang etchings of joys, so lovely that to look at them seems to be a living over again of the joys as blissfully as when they were passing; nay, even more blissfully, because we may be hurried so quickly past cups of pleasure and tables of delight that we can only sip and taste a little, not able to drain the full flasks or stay at the table of heart-food. But afterward in retrospection, in the chamber of memory, we may nourish us to the full at the board of good pleasures, of healthful comforts, and may drink to the bottom the glass of happiness, yes, slowly and partaking all its flavor, and holding it to the light that the sun may stream through its topaz joy. Thus often a joy that was but half caught in passing we can call back, hold in quiet, and enjoy to the utmost in memory. Also as a joy passes, 'tis but one delight, and gone; even if it were enjoyed to its depths, it was enjoyed but once. In memory it is at call to be enjoyed over and over forever. Also we can take our joys as the moments pass, only one at a time, but in memory we may place these joys side by side like pictures on a wall and enjoy many together, comparing them, and setting off one with another, like lovely sounds or colors, each fair in itself, but fairer still combined. Thus pains fade in memory, but joys keep their power and accumulate. What a heavenly law! Therefore I have

said that burdens of the past, which is to say, burdens of memory, can be only moral burdens, recollections of bad deeds and evil motives.

To this kind of burden, therefore, which is the secret burden of the mind relating to the past, the load of sins in memory, we will apply as before, the three questions. The first question is,—How much ought a man to bear his own burdens in this kind? The answer is that he can not escape them. He must bear them. The open and visible burdens very often a man may evade. He may unload them selfishly, meanly or feebly upon the shoulders of others. But those secret burdens which are sin-loads he must bear for himself. He can not shift them, nor throw them down by the wayside. He must carry them, however he stagger. He may sleep and forget them; but when he is near waking 'tis like his dreams will be colored with them. He may walk his way in a moral sleep, like as if dead in heart and moral sense; but sometime he will awake, some shudder will run through his life, some convulsion of experience, as if the whole earth reeled under him, and will shake him awake. Then are waiting there his sin-loads as heavy as when he forgot them, and he must bear them. Or he may try to drown himself in hard work or in reckless gaieties. No matter. He can not change the burden's weight, nor can work forever nor riot forever, and at every pause he falls back into the knowledge of the load on his neck.

But, then, must a sin remain always a heavy and terrible burden—perhaps heavier and more dreadful in measure as one grows conscious of it by reason of moral improvement? No, not forever, I think. Very long and sad and heavy may be the load of a sin; but as in nature we may see the havoc of a storm all effaced at last, or a battle all done away, so that no trace remains of its red and roaring horror and heaps of death but patches of deeper green in the grass perhaps, so, I must think, the burden of a sin may be buried some time in a tender and enriched turf of repentance. It will remain in memory—oh yes! for we can not loose a part of our very selves; but not as a yoke of burden, though never without a solemn sorrow. But it may be a burden during a long, struggling journey, in which no man can throw down his load or run away from it, but must

bear it. For as one of you has written well, "Two things must come to pass to make an evil deed as if it had never been. First, repentance; a sincere regret for the evil wrought. Secondly, atonement; a righting of the wrong so far as lies in our power. The first may be fulfilled in an instant, the second may require ages."\*

To the first question, then, How much ought a man to bear his own burden in this kind, the secret burden which is a moral load in memory? this is the answer—that he *must* bear it; that it is not a matter of will with any one, but of the law of God by which the burden of my sin is on my neck and I can not refuse it. But now comes the second question. How much ought we to try to bear one another's burdens in this kind? For though a man can not escape his own conscience-burden, nor unload it from his own heart to another's, yet may he not be helped in it? May it not be lightened for him by hope and love? Ah! what may not be lightened by love, whispering tenderly, "Hope! Courage! Cheer thee! Rise! Strive!" That we can not bear one another's burdens in this kind would seem, indeed, the fact at the first look. For the evil deed, which is the load, is all done and gone into the past and can not be changed; and it is a matter of memory and can not be affected in that strong tower which receives everything but returns naught; and it is a moral matter, a business of conscience, which judges us strictly and alone. Yet I think we can bear one another's burdens even in this kind; that is, we may lighten, cheer, sustain, strengthen. And if we can, then the answer to the question, How much ought we? is the same as before,—As much as we can. There is no barter of more or less in this holy duty, no limit but our power in this angelic ministry wherewith we may help one another in the name and by the might of God.

If, then, this fellow-bearing be possible under the sin-loads of memory, the third question now comes, In what way or manner ought we to offer or try to help bear another's burden in this kind?

To this question five answers come before me. The first is that, if we would be able indeed to give fellow-help in bearing sin-burdens, we must come to it with a delicate and humble

\* Mary L. Lord, in *Unity*, March 2, 1889.

sense. This I have said before touching the open and visible loads of life. Humility of spirit is even more needful in putting a hand for one another to the burdens of conscience. You will not help the fallen up or lighten the load of a bowed spirit if you go to him with a proud gait or a complacent air as if you had never staggered; and if never you have been shaken, nor even know what it is to sway while you stand, or stagger though you walk, yet you will help no one unless you go to him humbly, as remembering that you might totter, "restoring him in a spirit of meekness, looking to thyself lest thou also be tempted." All which meek wisdom may be put into this saying, that you will never help bear anyone's burden if you go to him thinking how able your help is, for you must be thinking only how great his need is. 'Tis thus that the virtuous (if then they can be called virtuous who have no meek and lowly heart), though they would have power by their virtue, loose it by their vainglorious sense of virtue; yes, and more than loose the power to help bear a burden, for they meddle with the burden with such irreverent hands and so rude a touch that they but jostle it painfully, and make it gall the neck which before it was weighing down to the dust. Some persons are so fine and wear such stiff ruffles of virtue that they are of little use one way and very harmful another way; because the virtuous have no need of them, and the sinful are scratched by the starched ruffles if they come near to lay a weary or shamed head on them for rest and for help. Thackeray says, "The wicked are wicked no doubt, and they go astray and they fall and they come by their deserts; but who can tell the mischief which the very virtuous do." Oh! I have seen come on the face such a black look, especially on the face of a woman when the error of another woman was mentioned—such a black look, such a hard, thick ice of virtue as seemed to me on the instant the most odious thing in the world, and I would run anywhither, even into chambers of shames, to be rid of that fine brow of deadly virtue. If any one have such a thrifty kind of goodness for his own credit with himself that, as has been said well, "it is the sin which he has not committed which seems the most monstrous," be sure that he will not touch a sin-burden with the tip of his finger but to make it heavier. He who very easily forgives himself will have no power to forgive another to that



other's benefit and help under his burden; and belike, too, such a one will forgive nothing but what in himself he forgives. "Other men's sins are before our eyes, our own behind our back," says Seneca; which means that we keep other's sins in sight to judge them, while we have forgotten our own as soon as done. But if a man feel his own sin no burden, can he have the meekness which can restore others? This then is the first answer to the question of what way we must take to help bear a moral burden, and an answer as great as any, namely, that the way is a humble spirit, to go to the burden not thinking of our fine ability but only, with pity, how heavy the load is on the neck of him who is bowed under it. I must think that Jesus never wore the stiff linen of obtruding virtue, nor ever in his face had the dark look nor the cold look of a touch-me-not goodness, nor in his manners ever gathered in his skirts with a look askance, lest they touch something sinful. For it is written that enemies heaped blame on him for consorting with many persons without asking questions about them, and written also that the sinful and heavy laden thronged about him, which never they do about one who pushes forth his goodness as a rebuke of them, but only around one who covers them and their sins together with a cloak of silent, lowly purity.

The second answer to our question is, that we ought to touch a moral burden in a large way, not in a narrow, condemning, sentencing way, fastening only on the fault like a blind human statute, but in the divine way which gathers all the world of facts, (for the moral history of each soul is a universe!) into sight and sympathy; by which I mean, justice supplied with a large heart. Touching that marvelous story in the eighth chapter of the Fourth Gospel, have you asked ever the question whether Jesus did *justice*? It *was* justice—that divine justice which sees more in the fault than the fault. Oh! often I have wondered at the fury of the virtuous to rend and tear the wicked, or even erring. When, three years ago, before the anarchist leaders were executed—that sad time which left a dark stain on our city,—I made "A Plea for Them" in this pulpit, not denying their crime nor glossing the guilt of it, but striving to see in the fault what was beyond the fault, there were cruel words abroad, and some persons denounced any merciful voice as a fel-



low of the "murderous hounds"—for so they called the misguided trespassers who were standing in "the shadow of death." It is not with such a spirit that we can help bear one another's burdens of transgression. To bear one another's burdens in this kind is a thing so great that it calls for greatness of mind. It is too heavenly, too beautiful, too much like God, who bears the load of us all, to be done by a narrow spirit or half-large heart. How can you help any one under a moral burden if he have more virtue in him than you have eyes to behold it? For then he has more goodness in his soul than you have soul to see goodness, and belike he can cure you better than you him.

The third answer to our question is that a way to help bear moral burdens is by kind encouragement and by continued trust. This is a point which I treated in the sermon of "Forgiveness." Touching wrongs done us, I said that the judgment may see clearly the risk in giving trust again, but that the heart often will take that risk for love's sake, resuming trust in outward relations however the reason halt at it inwardly. 'Tis so too in moral ills which are not wrongs done us; but other sins. Herein also we may judge clearly what the risk is, but often we shall take the risk, thus striving to bear one another's burdens. We shall say: "Up, fellow struggler! I too am strained, striving, staggering; but I have a firm footing just here. Give me thy hand. Up, now! 'One failure is not final!' One shame eats not up a whole life! Quit we us like men; be strong! Show me the way to thy virtues, and I will try to tell thee how to come by mine." Can there be a greater fellow-burden-bearing than this? Though we be pressed down as with mountains, they yield like sand hills before water if a fellow-being turn on them a current of hope and trust, that we may arise and stand, and be loved.

A fourth manner of bearing one another's burdens in this kind is to remember faithfully the kind, that they are *secret* burdens, sorrows of soul, weights of transgression, not visible or outward, but past and sunk in the soul. We help bear the burden when we keep the secret. Hath the burdened one revealed his load to us? What duty more sacred or more honorable than to keep it? If we tell it, if it escape us loosely, we sin worse than that sinner. Have we discovered by some ad-

venture? It hath come to us in some way on the wind's wing? Then no less holy is the duty to keep it, for then God hath made us a confidant. Either way we stand entrusted. Whether the burdened one confide in us or God invest us with it, we are trustees of it. How base to scatter it! What a breach of honor to be spendthrift of it! Surely it needs little heart or soul to see that in measure as we have good in ourselves we shall carry another's evil behind us to hide it, not before us to display it. This faithfulness of silence and secret care, which is honor and love, is one of the greatest, ah! too, most rare, ways of bearing hidden burdens for one another.

Finally, the fifth manner in which we may bear one another's burdens of conscience-sorrow is by a heavenly moral fact which I may call *exchange* of burdens. Who has not burdens? If I lay mine in thy lap, lo! thou hast thine own. Therefore to bear one another's burdens is to exchange them.

Here now is one of the great wonders and beauties of our moral being, which often I have had cause to gaze on with admiration and awe; I mean the ease with which we may forgive another if there be nobility in us, when we can not forgive ourselves by reason of that same noble spirit. Hence it happens that when two friends bound close in heart or by events, or better if it be by both, have some weary troubles of conscience which hang, and load, and weigh down the neck, then they may exchange these in a way so wonderful and so comforting that to pass their burdens from one to the other is like destroying the weight of them. For when the moral burden of one is unyoked from his neck and hung on the other, behold, it seems but a light burden to him who has taken it; and so with his own burden which has been transferred to the other, for though he would not forgive himself for that sin, yet still he sees that his friend sinned less in it than he would have sinned in doing it, because of a nature in his friend which did in some way cover up its quality from him, or make it seem less evil, or opened vast and overwhelming temptation. Wherefore in looking at his friend in this kind light, he finds the moral burden which bears down his friend's neck almost to falling and pitching headlong by the way, but a light thing on his own shoulders, and he loves his friend the more for his confession, and bids him good

cheer, and gives him a hand that never lets go, and the twain go on bearing one another's burdens and finding them light by love. For as A Kempis has said: "Love beareth a burden and maketh it no burden." And not only love, I add, but love and conscience and judgment conjoined; for by these a man can see better and farther for his friend out of the high tower of his heart than his friend can see for himself. Wherefore, I say, this is a wonderful and admirable fact in our moral nature, and thankfulness starts up when we look at it, namely, that though we be bowed down to the ground with shame and sorrow for sins and errors, a friend may lift them to his own neck and find but light weight in them, and see no more than that his friend hath a devout and tender conscience, for which he loves him the better. This is one of the great glories of love and true heartedness; for in measure as persons become truly heart-bound together in good conscience, in faithful fellowship and deep feeling, they may share in deep things and lay their hand on one another's burdens of very serious and great kinds not to be touched nor even known or suspected by those who explore only the outer courts of each other's affections. And this makes us think again what a wonderful, divine, holy and altogether mystical, shining and unsearchable thing love is, which hath been set in us out of the heart of God.

I have tried, to this point, to set forth the gospel of burden bearing in secret burdens of mind related to the past, which are moral burdens; the gospel that we must bear these burdens for ourselves and none can escape, yet that also we may bear them for each other by humility of spirit, by a large manner of sympathy, by hope and trust, by keeping the secret holily, and by the love which may exchange burdens. We live in wonders of mercy, for in these secret burdens, though each is compelled to bear his own, nor can escape at all, yet in these also we may bear one another's burdens, as if in truth by love we may become one in God.

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I come now to secret burdens which relate to the present:  
These are of all kinds, being the private sorrow or pain

which may affect us from many kinds of experiences, moral, or of the heart or in outward affairs.

But all these kinds fall into two general classes, convenient for treatment:

1. Serious or noble burdens.
2. Petty or ignoble burdens.

First, of the noble burdens. These are of three kinds:

1. Moral burdens, by falls or failures, or by besetting temptations.

2. Sorrows of the heart.

3. Disappointment amid difficulties and struggles in life.

These, now, I will treat by asking, as heretofore, the three questions by which we are examining the subject of burden-bearing.

The first question is: How much ought a man to bear this kind by himself and hide it in his own heart. I answer, as before that, with respect to moral burdens, he *must* bear them; he *can not* throw them off or load them on others at will. Though he make himself like one dead, devoured in labor or riotings, he must come to himself some time and know he is eating husks, swine-food, and feel the burden of it. With respect to sorrow and disappointment, I answer, as before, that a man must bear his own burdens as much as he can, bravely, manfully, striving not to spread them over other persons, to pack not others' shoulders with them, but to carry his own burden with simplicity and piety. Yet in these secret burdens, loads of heart, soul, mind, as in the open and visible burdens of which I have spoken, I would forbid not the unity of love, the sacred sharing of friendship. 'Tis but human to lay one's head on a friend's bosom sometimes; and if we did not, where at last were the bosom of love? It would waste, dry and vanish, being unused. But while thus we may tell our burdens in this kind and may look to a friend to take them into his heart with us, where we may lay them down a little while and be warmed and blest, this must be done manfully, with a brave reserve of speech and tone and a beautiful dignity. The head must be laid down like strength for rest, not like weakness for support, or beggary for gain. For as it is of human love to seek sympathy, so it is of piety to take our burdens up alone and bear them, as unto God;

and while we may go to human love for comfort and the preciousness of fellow heart-beats, yet we ought to do so in the strength of the piety, with a brave as well as a tender front, a devout no less than a loving heart. 'Tis well said by Margaret Fuller that "there is some danger lest there be no real religion in the heart which craves too much daily sympathy."

I come herewith to our second question touching these secret burdens of the mind related to the present moment, namely: "How much ought we to bear each other's burdens in this kind? I answer, like as before, as much as we can; and for the same reason, that the freedom and the duty of the heavenly heart are one and have no bounds. Moral burdens, heart sorrows, strength-straining under struggles, these are noble burdens. 'Tis one of the bounties of spiritual life that we are able to bear them for each other; which is to say, we may lighten them by our ministry to one another, and then all will be helped and all burdens lightened, each one by each.

There are two means in chief by which thus these invisible burdens may be borne for one another. The first means is sympathy, on which I need not dwell because I have said much of it already touching visible burdens and the secret moral burdens of memory. Only this I will say again, that sympathy includes a very great store of good offices. Many kinds of heart-food are garnered in that large granary. It holds carefulness, trustfulness, loving counsel, thoughtfulness, fairness of judgment, cheerfulness, steadfastness and much other nourishment for hungry hearts. And all come to feed at these bins. "Pity and need," 'tis said well, "make all flesh kin. There is no caste in blood, which runneth of one hue, nor caste in tears, which trickle salt with all."

The other chief means by which we are able to bear one another's burdens in this kind, and indeed in all kinds, is by a law of general and reacting effect which rules in every place where there is fellow burden-bearing. For to bear another's burden is to lighten our own; for while a man is busy with a friend's burden, he can not be attentive to his own. Now, there is no way to lighten one's burden so excellent as to withdraw the mind from it. If the mind then not only be turned from the load on us, but fixed on strong and beautiful things, then not



only it rests from its burden but gathers strength to return to it; and to go back to the load with more strength is the same as to find it lighter. Now to what can the mind fix itself more beautiful than love, or more strong and beautiful than love in exercise bearing the burdens of another? Therefore when we turn away from our own burden to put hands to another's by sympathy, by loving counsel and faithful cheer, we get such strength by that ministry to another, that it is the truth that he too, by our very devotion to him, becomes to us, in the wonder-working of God, a minister, and lifts at our burden by our very own lifting at his.

From the means whereby we may bear one another's burdens, we turn to the manner of doing it. Here arises the third question. In what way or manner ought we to offer or try to help bear another's burden in this kind?—that is, in secret, invisible, inward burdens relating to the present moment.

The answer is, first and best, With a lowly and simple spirit, and not thinking of ourselves as doing any fine thing. For otherwise we can lift no burdens of any kind. But on this I need dwell no more. Another answer, and very useful is: Take up another's burden beautifully, handsomely, with a fine grace. Either so, or touch it not. Which is but to say that if we lay hand to another's burden at all, we must do so in such manner as to bear it; which means lighten it, not add to it; bear it up, not bear down with it. If a burden be taken for us grudgingly, ungraciously, severely, with fault-finding and reproaches, the manner of taking the burden is made a greater burden than the burden, and the load rather is pressed down on us than lifted or lightened.

Grace of behavior, that reverence for human nature and deference to a soul which exalts an act of help to be like a coronation and makes the gift of a trifle like the bestowal of a kingdom—how beautiful it is! Shakespeare speaks of "King-becoming graces,—devotion, patience, courage, fortitude;" but these are man-becoming graces—every man a king!—and if I add respectfulness, humility, delicacy (though I know not but these be all the same quality with different names), I have carved the very stature of manly grace. This grace must come of the soul. It is not the follower of place or possession. "Riches," it has been



said truly, "may enable us to confer favors; but to confer them with propriety, and grace requires a something that riches can not give." Not all "the wealth of Ormus or of Ind, "barbaric pearl and gold," can lift one little finger-weight of secret burdens of the mind; but a little grace in us may sweep another's burden upward as a breeze catches up a cloud from the earth—a dark fog here, but thus lifted into the upper sun-beam, a white silver light. It is with good meaning that in the poetry of the Greeks the three Graces always were seen 'linked and tied hand in hand,' thus imaging the tying of man to man which grace brings to pass; and the three sisters ever were pictured all unrobed, meaning that kindness must be very simple and sincere and delicate of mind, without covering or pretence, lest it come true, as has been said, that sympathy be "but a mixture of good humor, curiosity and self-importance."

It is another point, if we be to share one another's burdens, that we should act so as to draw others to admit us to their burdens and share them with us. This we must do according to the degree of the nearness of the person to us. It needs no enforcing and hardly the saying that if we be to give help in burden-bearing, we must not be so forbidding in it, so unsympathetic in manner, so unopen in face that burdens will hide from us as if affrighted—I mean men will keep them from us, not show them to us. This is a great point regarding parents toward children. If it be true, as has been averred, that "it is the most beautiful object the eye of man can behold to see a man of worth and his son live in an entire unreserved correspondence," how can this be unless the father be a natural attraction to his son, drawing him to bring his burdens no less than joys unto that sweet converse, assured by divination and natural trust as well as by experience that his burden shall not be made heavier by that communication. But if the father so act, however justly if it be justice with a frown, or hold himself so distant and high and strong, that to bring a burden to him is as great a burden as the burden, or even more dreadful, what has the son left to him but a cold cell of secrecy? It is naught but attraction that brings the child to the parent, standing up heart-high like a freeman; aught else, whether it be called discipline or duty or whatsoever, only lays him at the feet bound

like a slave. I have observed that it is not fear of penalty or punishment which withholds the child from confidence and makes him dread bringing to view any burden, be it a fault or whatever—not punishment but the heart-sickness of talking to an unconceiving ear, the abasement of being berated, the scourges of black frowns, the spurns of cold scorn. Till the fire of doom the parent may cry, “I command you to come to me. Your confidence is required. I enjoin you to bring your burdens and temptations unto me”—and he will move his son’s will not a jot; but if so he act and so he be in himself and hath such a heart that it is the son’s own will to come to him, he hath the boy’s whole heart; and with the hand of age, which hath let go some hold of earth for heaven, he may bear up the burdens of youth that yet hath come to no heaven unless he find it in his father’s age.

Among the sorrows of life, the heart-burdens, the hardest are the evil deeds of those who are precious to us, but go astray. When children fall to wantonness, to dishonor, ruin, when friends, lovers, parents, are overthrown with vices and disgrace, then indeed is laid a very heavy burden, then “if one look into the land behold darkness and sorrow!” then “gray hairs are brought down with sorrow to the grave!” then do women mourn, “Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow!” What shall be done with these heavy burdens? May they be shared? Shall we open them, these shames of our beloved, that other beloved may help us bear the burden? These griefs are noble enough to be shared—the noblest of all sorrows. Yet, for loyalty, they must be shared very little, and never except with the very closest and dearest who have great rights in us, nor with them ever merely to get sympathy or condolence. For it is loyal and faithful to hide misdeeds and shames. As a man will shield a woman or child from blows with his body, so must we cover the faithless or shamed with our silent souls.

Therefore, though a man may help another (who may be willing) bear such burdens as these, yet he ought to will that no one shall help him bear them, but he will carry them alone.

Also sometimes we have no way but to bear alone if we will bear the least; for there are some burdens which are made heavier by communication of them. This is a principle which often

I have pondered; yet with no light or explanation occurring to me equal to the depth of the fact. Why is it indeed that some of the saddest sorrows of life most easily are borne all alone? Why is it that some heavy griefs become heavier and not lighter if shared? I say I have thought often and fervently of this fact in our moral nature, and sometimes with wonder, as of a noble trait placed in us by nature, or I should say nature's Lord, the Life that worketh in nature—a noble trait, I say, because it seems to acknowledge, yes, and to lay stress on, the dignity, the inaccessible place, the holy region of personality. And yet it seems strange that some things become heavier if we share them, and are borne most easily in silence and secret, none knowing, none being invited to share or bear with us; strange that there are things in which we cannot bear one another's burdens without adding to the weight of them. Seeing this fact in some sorrows, I have asked myself at times what kinds of sorrows, and how many, they are which best can be borne all alone, to share which is to make them heavier. Now it seems to me that these sorrows, when they are noble ones, are all of one kind, namely, the pains which come from unloyal treatment by friends, and especially by our near kith and kin, as by wife or husband or child or brother or sister. The principle seems to be that when one of these is unloyal, still we must be loyal. As the stoic said, "Beware of behaving to the cruel as they behave to others," so must we say in this case that we are not to be unloyal to the unloyal. Therefore these sorrows are they, or at least the chief of them, which to share makes them more heavy, because then we add to the pain the evil, and therefore the new or other pain, of our own unloyalty; and it is a very sad thing to be unloyal, and a hard thing to bear the sense of it. Wherefore let all families beware not to grumble of each other to other persons; and especially let those who stand nearest, however they be grieved, or wrung, or brought to death, keep it to themselves in solemn dignity and by reason of the purity of loyalty; for so they will suffer less. Indeed I will liken the sorrows that come by unloyal disclosure of the cruelty or harshness of those who ought to be the tenderest and kindest—I liken these sorrows I say, to a kind of rampant seed of weeds, seeds already tufted and waiting only the waft of the breath of a word

to fly no one knows whither and bear an endless crop of dishonors, pains troubles, remorse, past all prevention and control. More than this, there is a dignity in bearing such sorrows alone which has power in the mind to lighten and, if I may say so, give honor to the pain.

I come now to petty or ignoble burdens. These are so many and so bad in their affect on us, that sometimes I think we hardly should know we had burdens but for the teasing of the mean and petty kinds, the plague of ignoble heaviness. For, however heavy be the grand sorrows of life, the noble and divine burdens, being noble, in that measure their dignity weighs up the pain and heaviness of them, like a little gold in one scale-pan outweighing a heap of earth in the other. For if a burden be a noble sorrow, the pain of it is not so great nor its heaviness such a load as its dignity is divine and its nobility an elevation. If we be called to great sorrows, it is a divine fact and glory in us that we are capable of them. To be given charge of a burden which is a noble sorrow, is so high a thing in God's providence that it is not like a loading of our backs but rather a coronation of our heads, showing us to be the King's children, because we must learn to bear the weight of a prince's crown. But the petty, ignoble burdens, heaped on us by a mutinous spirit, an unreverent, muttering, unobedient mind under difficulties or trials, bemoaning basely or taking sullenly the hard places in our lots—these are ills so mean and sordid that they are dead weight. They make us like pedlars loaded with heavy packs of worthless things.

These ignoble loads, being not sorrows of heart, nor moral burdens, nor hard and high struggles, are little hindrances in affairs, vexations, frictions,—the inevitable small nets, mazes, rubs, clogs, lurches, mishaps, weariness, retardments, discouragements, incident to any station or task. Concerning these now we will ask the questions which have guided us hitherto in this subject:

The first is, How much ought a man to bear his own burdens in this kind? The answer is, Wholly and altogether. No one ought to be willing to load others with his petty troubles, frictions, chagins, dejections. The right rule is that only noble burdens may be opened to another; the small tediums, blots and

blurs, forlornesses, disrelishes, discomforts, displeasures, irritations, chafings which fly around every one, ought to be taken quietly and silently by each one for himself, and never passed on to a comrade, never prated of. For to talk of them is to busy with buzzings of petty nothings the tongue which may be full of eloquence, an entertainer of grand things, an organ of blissful poetry or patient piety. How paltry and unreligious it is, while the heavens rain glories, to pick up from the earth and hand to each other these small galls and cramps! Besides, what gain is there? If you may let loose your flies of small smarts on your friend, he may turn out his gnats of little twinges on you. So each then is beset with two swarms, and belike the clamors of the fretting insects will make an unprayerful din in your ears. You may exchange noble burdens, and lighten them; but you can not exchange these petty things; for if you hatch the eggs of them under your tongue, they come to such a swarm that still there is a cloud of them for you as well as for your neighbor, and you receive his swarm also. I say such small burdens are not worthy of being borne for one another. Each one should bear his own. This is simple dignity and unselfishness.

This should be the rule for partners in that enterprise or business which is called "married life." For if they communicate the noble, spiritual, heroic burdens, putting away every small ado quietly, they will live in a high region, with a "Pisgah-sight" of life, which will draw forth their love and fellowship in a like noble measure and beauty.

What then of the second question?—which is, How much ought we to bear one another's burdens in this kind? This is answered in the answer to the first question, and the answer is, In no measure. We ought to refuse to bear such burdens for another. We should resist the laying of them on us. If any will be so little dignified as to discharge on us the washings of his petty difficulties and the drippings of his grumbings, we ought to refuse to be a sink for such matters.

But you will say "Are we not to bear with the depressions of our friends." No indeed, not against reason. Those dolorous moods called "the horrors," "the dismals," "the blues" ("Moping melancholy," says Milton; "Supine and sottish des-



pondencies," says Jeremy Taylor), are impious frowns and waggings of the tongue against the skies. And are we to listen to impieties? These moods ought not to be borne, either by friends or by sociable companions. If there be good reason for the heaviness, then it is a *noble* burden and therefore may be shared and borne for one another. If there be no worthy reason, but the mood is only self-indulgence, then it is not to be borne nor respected, nor the selfish nurse of his own little glooms be allowed to spread a darkness over another's heart or over a company. He should be disciplined by social exile, quietly left to himself without sympathy, because his pettiness is beneath sympathy, nor worthy of more than pity. For sympathy is a meat for a kingly heart, not a slop for a moping beggar.

If now no one has claim on another to help bear ignoble burdens of mind, petty discontents, paltry displeasures, may any one be allowed to make *himself* a burden to another by babyish waywardness, childish wiles, flickerings, demurrings, coyings, whims, fits, crotchets. I answer that no one may be allowed. It is our right to be nursed while we have a baby mind in a baby body. But if a person will have a baby inconstancy in a grown body, he should be left to nurse his own whimseys. No one should consent to be burdened with his freaks, or give any heed to his "mysterious difficulty to be pleased." For there is no way to bring any one to a true human estate or to do any justice, but to require of them adult duties of soul when they have come to an adult body. Be cautioned, I pray you, that I counsel no unkindness, no reproaches, no scorn or coldness. I say only that the childish, the pouting, inconstant, toying, should not be given serious places or asked to wise counsels, till, by the discipline of being left out firmly, they awake to earn the consideration which unearned they should not have.

'Tis the same with the ill-tempered and nagging; no one should bear with them except kindly to be silent towards them. They should not be sought for company, nor given place or power; for this is to extend petulance or tartness or rudeness into an influence, and grants a testy tyranny to any one who will usurp it.

The rule is the same for those dispositions which will do naught



without being coaxed. Some persons, I have observed, require to be coaxed and entreated to anything; whatever it be, before they will take it, they must be besought,—even unto the pleasures and benefits which are provided for them. Thus they lay a heavy tax of patience, time and strength on every one to whom they vouchsafe anything. I counsel that no one should be coaxed. I think it very harmful even to coax children. 'Tis but warming the nest of self-importance for a brood of little vanities. But especially grown persons never should be coaxed; for to require to be coaxed is a fantastic, contrary, childish tyranny, not to be allowed but disciplined. When nature hath bestowed years on us, we owe the interest which is discretion, to the goodly company wherein nature hath set us; and the payment must be required.

'Tis the same with those who have done to us very faithless acts, shuffling away not only the office and seemliness of manhood but the precious fealties and engagements of love—as I have counseled in treating of “Forgiveness.” Such truants or egotists or worldly-minds, whichever they be, should not be coaxed, followed, besought, but left alone where it has pleased them to place themselves, until, unnoticed and unentreated, it please them to come back. For we must not increase self-consequence by beseeching it.

What then? Do I counsel harshness, punishment, reprisal? By no means, I counsel only a gentle steadiness, which will do or say no harsh thing, but neither will bow itself to make a tyrant by bearing tyranny. If these principles be received bravely, as just and due, then I say, as in every such point I have said, that any soul which has the unselfish purity and devotion to long to know the right action in any case, will know it. The principle is that adult children should not be borne with as fitting burdens, but disciplined; and this not less for their own sake than for ours; and the discipline should not be reproaches, harsh outcries, punishments, but a making of their self-important waywardness and baby wantonness a solitude for them, till they grow tired of the silence and return to their kind with a mind fit for company.

I come now to the last division of the invisible burdens of mind, those which relate to the future. These are: 1. Not

moral burdens; 2. Not sorrow of heart; 3. Not difficulties, struggles nor disappointment from them; for all these can be but in memory or experience at the present moment. The burdens that pertain to the future are fears, concern, painful foreboding. Now these burdens of forelooking must be either about events or about persons. If about events, fears of mishaps that may occur, this is but an unmanly pack for a man to load himself withal, a mere lack of faith and of good human cheerfulness. "As it is presumption and arrogance," says Dr. Johnson in his big Latin way, "to anticipate triumphs, it is weakness and cowardice to prognosticate miscarriages." This kind of foreboding is an ignoble burden, which therefore neither should be harnessed on one's own neck nor borne for another. If the burden of the future be regarding persons, some of the thousand anxieties touching fate or character which love gathers to our eyes around heads precious to us, this is heart pain, and dignified; therefore worthy to be borne for one another.

With these burdens of the future, therefore the answers to our three questions are plain: 1. That mere forebodings about events are weakness, and not only should be borne unshared, but a man nobly should rid himself of them, for his whole duty in religion is to deal manfully with the present, and a conscientious forecast is not the same thing as foreboding cries. 2. That anxieties about beloved persons should be borne for each other as much as we can. 3. That the way is by delicacy of sympathy, and tenderness, and a manner obtained in its perfection only from a deep reverence for the human heart. No more need I say on burdens related to the future, because all that has been said of other burdens will apply to these also.

One thought to conclude; and what must this be but a common thought? For can one go on any exploration without coming back to the common? For the common is the great and universal. Whence it happens that I am landed again, or rather I would say havened and harbored, in the thought of love as containing all the principle and science of this text, "Bear ye one another's burdens" and "Each man shall bear his own burden." Thus it is: First, love should wish to share burdens; or rather I would say, by its nature *must* wish, for else it is not love, however it pretend. Love, then, I say, must wish to

share sorrows, perforce must long to bear one another's burdens. But, again, love should not wish to impose burdens, or rather, as before, I must say, love *can not* wish; for it is love's nature to comfort, cheer and save. Wherefore love will be unwilling to give a burden to be borne, and yet love also can not rest nor be in any quiet until it do seize the other's burden to bear it, or, if not to take it all, then to share in it so that the twain may lift it together. Now what follows if these two be put together in right measures?—that is, if there be the impulse to take the burden, on the one side, and again the impulse not to impose the burden, each excellent in its kind and degree—what I say follows then? Surely this follows, that then the noble burdens will be shared and borne one for another, and the petty burdens will be dropped out of sight. If this be true, then one must cry, “What a solvent, what a reconciler and ruling power love is!” For here in the very nature of simple love is involved the most proper and reasonable principle of the bearing of one another's burdens. By love itself, that is, by its very nature and by what simply it is, if it be in the heart at all, we see that the noble burdens will be borne one for another, because it is the nature of love that it must take up the load; and the petty burdens will be dropped on the way and trodden under foot as we go, because it is the nature of love that it shall not impose burdens but save and shield. Is not this a glorious look into the nature of our hearts; wherein the more I look, the more do I see the image of the earthly and the heavenly together, of all joys and all sorrows and all duties combined in one image. which is the face of God.



## A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

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“A happy New Year!” I take my text from the lips of men.

All around us men are saying this to each other. Doth not each one know for himself that he says it with honest sympathy for the joys and sorrows that may visit his brother man in the unknown future!

Nature, through the long winter, continues the same glad saying with a prophecy. The flowers closed their eyes to rest after the summer carnival. The trees have laid by their attire and sleep in healthful weariness after the festivities. The earth slumbers. All is hush and rest, save the ticking of the frost work as its crystals shoot. The meadow-brook is encased with a chilly glass, the foam is spun into a frost web, the expansion of the freezing water-veins loosens the rocks with sharp reports. Thus ticks nature's clock measuring the hours of her night of rest. But rest is preparation; preparation is prophecy. Nature sleeps only till again the wedding morning dawns, the spring. Then in speedy decoration clad, the trees and flowers attend the marriage of the lusty sun, robed with gold-laced clouds, to the tender earth, veiled for her bridal in modest mist.

The New Year greeting is cyclical, rolling round with the earth until whirled back again to its uttering term. I count everything of no little value which lays down rules, cycles, periods and punctuality in life. Some persons, indeed, despise all this, or affect to, and if bound to any stated seasons, murmur therein or strain at them. But rule and regularity is nature's way—everywhere recurrence and stated return. Therefore, they who will not have rule in life, or in work, learn not nature's lesson and hear not her instruction, but go against her. This is sure

to come to little, often to nothing. Nay, it would always come to nothing if all were to do the same. If they who shut out nature's regularity, gather or come to achievement, as may happen, it is because they are few, and all the others work well-gartered with rules. This is like the prosperity of the dishonest, who would have no chance but for the honest. Moreover, it is the cycle of time and of the seasons that makes associations, and associations are dwellings of sacred things, birthdays, wedding-days, death-days. Fair and wonderful are the diurnal and annual revolutions of the earth, which bring morning and night and all the recurring seasons. We may imagine time as reeled off from an enormous wheel, each length of the web, once around the wheel, made in the same pattern and in arks of familiar colors, recognized as they are unrolled. Some important beginning in our life happened in Spring, or in Summer, Autum, or Winter. The next time the season comes the earth puts on the same attire to celebrate our festival. I have known a wife celebrate the tenth anniversary of marriage by wearing her bridal dress—but not always is it a pretty thing, because past fashions look grotesque. A smile of amusement rises more readily, mayhap, than poetic sympathy. But nature, who is satisfied with her four robes of green, gold, brown and ermine, can attend us after fifty years in the colors and fashions of our wedding day.

Days of great associations fall pathetically mingled. Your joy-day may be my woe-day. But nature has heart and voice for us all, and all at once. The breeze, although but one voice, and the more articulate organs of beast and bird, whisper strange differences to different ears and are "all things to all men." By the recurring seasons, the loving spirit in nature surprises us, as it were, out of secrets, joyful or sad, which we would not confess to a human being. But the divine heart shares them with us, and treasures them in the pages of siderial time, which, perforce, we must turn over and read once a year. Wherefore I say I like the New Year greeting, because everywhere it comes, and in the morning it wakes saying: Now is the day to take this especial delight of comradeship. We take it and are the better. But without the season, we should run to our labors, as commonly, and be poorer for lack of the greeting. The greeting, being honest, can not be purchased, and is much to give, nor less to receive.



A happy New Year! Why should not the kindly wish be prophecy for us, as surely as the winter rest ushers in the golden summer? Why should not the year be happy? Surely if we say, "A happy New Year to you," it is as much a congratulation as a wish; a song of trust, an act of faith! There is a great good cheer in this, that the happiness which we bid another, we may take in part for granted; for we should be little like to wish joy for the future if the past had been all grievous, or to look for light if life were shut in a cave. Therefore, to say, Be the future happy, is the same as to say, We have had acquaintance with joy and know it, and therein already are happy. This is so good and useful that the festival of New Year greeting belongs to the human heart, not to any particular religion, or faith, or form. It is older than Christianity, and no stranger in many different zones. The ancients sent gifts to each other at this season, with hopes and fancies that they might be omens of success. For which reason and because of the idolatrous rites of the celebration, the ancient fathers of the Church, as the Chronicler has it, "did vehemently inveigh against the observation of the calends of January." But the human heart which was parent of the festival was the grandfather who overcame the fathers, and the festival has survived. Northern nations indeed delighted in it with so much jollity that it gave name to their years; they reckoned their age by Iolas, which in the Gothic language means merry-making. Our poetry has a like grateful grace when it counts age by summers—so many summers old. Surely a Iola, a joyful greeting time, is an excellent date for reckoning. Many calenders begin in Iolas; epochs are great joy times, or glory times, for men reckon from Iolas, not from mischiefs; like the *Anno Urbis* of Rome, or the *Anno Domini* of the Christian, glories of history or faith. In this the Hebrews far excell all others; for they date from the creation, which surely was the greatest of all Iolas.\*

\* Yet I know not that this always is so. For the Parsees set their era at their overthrow, when Yasdegerd was killed, the people scattered, and the religion penetrated by Islam. This seems a strange exception which I know not how to understand. But when a sorrow takes the place in national life which commonly a joy or a success holds, surely it is because fortitude, valor and unsubdued life so have flourished and overmastered the woe that, while the empire fell, faith flew up and away from the ruins. For which view it is some ground that the Parsees still worship in their fire temple, having kept the ancient faith high and pure; and I have read it is part of their religion to

I have read of a singular genius long before the days of repeaters, who wished to enable himself to tell the time by his dial at night. So he made a clock with a very large dial having hollow figures which he filled with various jellies and sweet-meats of different flavors. Then in the night, by taking a bit of the confection in the figure to which the hand of the clock pointed, he could taste the time. A genial invention at any rate, and with a good allegory in it. For are not the ages marked off by just such sweetened and flavored hours or epochs? Is not the Christian era, from which we date, such a honey-filled figure on the dial? Is not the Copernican astronomy another? Are not the rise of printing, the discovery of America, the birth of chemistry, the American Revolution, all such sweetened indicators on Time's dial? Can we not taste them in nights of revolts and wars and tyrannies and famines, and cry out, "The night is far spent, the morning cometh?"

Up then at this season! Let hope be crowned! Read Milton's *L'Allegro*! We shall cope with the evils all the better if we drown them for a day in the taste of the sweets of prophecy that mark this hour. What "trips it on the light fantastic toe" if not Time? Time, an old man, a decrepit old totterer with a scythe? Why, he is the most staunch-footed and sturdiest young farmer, mowing down a year as if it were the stalk of a second, and plowing, seeding and reaping another like a miracle. But what shall be reaped by our neighborhood, our city, our country, the world, in this New Year? When the seasons have gone over it "like a tale that is told," what will be the harvest? Ah! that hangs in a measure on each one of us. Which is good; for who would be such a beggar as to let a year pass without so much as the pressure of his finger on it in any way—neither the better nor the worse for him? But who can do aught against the good, even if he would. He may seem to do much evil in a year, if he will, but in the heavenly arc of years, "going forth from the end of the heavens and their circuit unto the ends of it," he is naught. A German poet asks: "Will men ever write thus '*Anno Domini* eleven millions eighteen hundred ninety-one?'"

fill the ten days before their New Year with many acts of charity, wherein, perhaps, may be a reminiscence of the strong but blossoming sorrow from which dates their era.

Ah! that is a sobering question. A long time that, A. D. 11001891; a long stretch to be ticked out one second at a time. Who can say anything of it? Who can judge? What sybil can soothsay about that enormous sweep of time? Yet we may foresee much about A. D. 11001891. For no one can turn the years from their aim. One may set himself against "the stream of tendency" like a man against a mighty current; but the water only is heaped up a little on him, never stayed. The things which are the greatest things now will be the greatest things in A. D. 11001891. Wherever we may be, or whatever may betide this old earth, no matter; the greatest things now will be the greatest things then. These greatest things are justice, goodness, kindness, human fellowship. Also, many things very great now will be very small then. It is not so easy to see what those things are which will dwindle; but it is fair to think that the power of mere individual accumulation, the might of riches, the vast inequalities of distribution, the thirst for gain, the assembling of legislatures to enact thousands of laws every year, military glory, and many such-like things that now are mighty and seem grand, will shrink vastly or be gone after 11,000,000 years. Surely the things that seem petty and trivial even now will have perished then. Will men grumble and whine, will women oppress themselves for fashion, will both join in petty social rivalries and mean emulations, at that far date? Truly, we think not! We hope much for humanity in a thousand, yea, in a hundred years. If we ask what the past most is full of, up leap to our memories wars and rumors of wars, empires, kings, parliaments, religions. But the past is fuller of one thing than of all of them together; it is full to the brim and pressed down and running over with prophecy, hope and good cheer for the future.

"All of good the past hath had  
Remains to make our own time glad."

And

"One accent of the Holy Ghost  
The heedless world has never lost."

But all good things and all the spiritual voices are no more than heralds of the march of events on the road. Let us say it boldly, it is impossible to look forward and compute our inheritance.

At least for this new and glad season, for a joyful hour now at the beginning, let all the sad things, the threatening things, the pains and sufferings and diseases and famines we are wrestling with, be swallowed up in the tide of our expectations. We have gained a kind of moral and spiritual gravity conferred by our long, slow climb up the hill of knowledge. Now all the powers of nature will help our swift gliding into the valley of peace and good will and plenty. It is impossible to dream the works which men may do on Nature and on themselves.

Therefore, A happy New Year! A happy New Year! exclaim you all. Let the church walls echo it! Surely we have fore-gleams of a better time coming! But the coming of a better goes far now to make a good. Why may not this year be a good herald of far coming years? Why, indeed, should not the year be happy?

Is it because our lot is poverty, privation, or even hardship? And have we not learned that not in having much but in using well what we have lies happiness; "that the rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken;" and that to the grateful mind the simplest things at home, the most homely and familiar matters, are food for gladness and thanksgiving?

Is it because we are driven to severe labor, wearisome toil? And have we not learned that work is our very life and power; that our enforced duties shield us from seductions of sloth or rioting; and that as we give our mind to our tasks, work with the heart and conscience, labor with love and by choice, not under lashes of necessity, our toil develops manliness; and the broom or the hammer, no less than the astronomer's telescope, leads us to knowledge of celestial relations?

Is it because our state is humble, we desire the praise and honor of men; wish for rank and power? And have we not learned as the poet saith that not, "happiness denied" but "happiness disdained" makes us wretched,—disdained because "she comes too meanly dressed to win our smile, and calls herself *content*,—a homely name?" Have we not learned that we ought to wish rather the praise of an instructed conscience, the true rank of noble character, the power of a pure spirit; that faithful work ever will reap reward in the end; that if our present place be humble, we may all the more join a righteous am-

bition with sweet content, keeping the top in view while the valley witnesses our industry and blooms under our feet?

Is it because disappointment may visit us, our cherished plans fail? And have we not learned that as outward things fall away we find *ourselves*; that disappointments and failures leave us closer to our own souls, make us feel the hidden depths and reality of the spirit, and teach us humility as we feel ourselves in the power of the Infinite and All?—As Griffith said of the fallen Cardinal, “His overthrow heaped happiness upon him; for then, and not till then, he felt himself, and found the blessedness of being little.”

Is it because sickness may fall on us, wasting pain torment us? And have we not learned to welcome lessons of divine patience, though the teaching be severe? Have we not learned that strength comes as we need it, that no burden can be *too* heavy? Know we not the sick and suffering whose peace, cheerfulness, and inward joy, rebuke the loud complaints of selfish health and thrift? And seems not all nature brighter, earth and sky full of keen delights to the reviving senses of convalescence? He who giveth pleasure, shall he not also perfect us with pain?

Is it because we are lonely, but little affection shines on our path, there are none to speak the tender word or do the loving act? Yes, there are sad hours to such, lone longing, holy passions, bitter tears. But have we not learned that within all shadows stands the Father, whose love abounds for the lonely, the desolate; who judges not by form, is not turned by circumstances, and in good time, now, hereafter, here, somewhere, will bring that finite love to the heart which he has made us to long for so deeply?

Is it because, if we have those who love us, death may divide us, or has divided us? Do we fear the pangs of parting, or remember them? God forbid that stoic maxims shame a single tear of mother, lover, or friend? Over a loving soul the heavens stoop in holy benediction, and angel blessings fall as the snow. Yet, have we not learned what *life* means? Have we not found that our loved and lost have shown us life in its necessary continuity, each a Patmos-prophet to whom a door in the sky has opened, who tells, in such strains as no ear hears but our own, the things of the City of Life descending to the earth?



Is it because of difficult duty, strong temptation? And have we not learned that, in the conflict, God always is within call; that always we may conquer the difficult duty or strong temptation if we will; and that, when we conquer, "its strength passes into us?"

Is it because we are misunderstood,—victims of prejudice, misrepresentation? And have we not learned that duty is its own high reward, and that naught can wrest from us His blessing whose eye scans the heart and knows the secret thought?

Is it because of our own moral insufficiency, imperfection, errors, sins? And have we not learned that we may hope and rise and strive again, in measure as we feel our falls humbly and sincerely; that the garden agony was followed by angel ministrations, and the hero went forth renewed, uplifted, peaceful, triumphant? To grieve deeply for unworthiness is to come to ourselves; and then let us arise, as children, and go to our Father; for from a great way off he will come to meet us.

Is it because we seem to do very little in the world, we can do nothing very fine or excellent, we seem of small service? I have known persons suffer much from this cause. But surely this is not of faith. And doth it not vaunt our ignorance for knowledge, our small horizon for the infinite heavens? Have we not learned that no one who is faithful to duties in whatever lot, is useless; nay, that he is a valuable soldier and sentry in the Lord's army; that none who strives fails, for endeavor is the noblest success; that no one hath more of a place in God's providence than another; that no mortal eye can see how far simple faithfulness spreads in His service? Surely we know that

"A man that looks on glass,  
On it may stay his eye,  
Or, if he pleaseth, through it pass,  
And then the heaven espy.

All may of Thee partake;  
Nothing can be so mean  
Which with this tincture, For Thy sake,  
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause  
Makes drudgery divine:  
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,  
Makes that and the action fine.



This is the famous stone  
That turneth all to gold;  
For that which God doth touch and own  
Can not for less be told.

If now there seem to be no reasons (but bad ones, kinds of impiety) why this may not be a happy new year, let us ask concerning some of the plentiful means and sources of happiness.

The first and best source of happiness is to know it lies not in outward conditions but in ourselves. For neither does it depend on having fine things, nor could it spring from having all we want; for, as well has been said, if once we were so wretched as to have all we wished, there would be naught left for us but to wish there were something else to wish for. Not in such things lies happiness; but in ourselves wholly; which is to say, in our manner of taking what is offered to us; which is to say, in our state of heart, thankful or ingrate, pious or impious, reverent and lowly or bold and flaunting of ourselves. Happiness is an inward fact which outward conditions may serve but not create, and if not serving, still can not destroy.

This is very simple, sober good sense, and a very common saying, that happiness lies in the state of mind, being aloof from outward conditions, which affect it not. Dr. Hedge has written, "Make the earth a garden, drive want from the face of it, and ignorance and vice. Let competence be secured to all. Build palaces instead of huts, and let cities as lustrous as the New Jerusalem lift there domes into the skies attempered by art to perpetual blandness. Let their be no forced tasks, no chiding of the laggard will, no painful bracing up of the dissolute mind; but only duties which invite, and work which is play. Fashion a world after your own heart, and know that a day in that world will have the same proportion of joy and sorrow that a day has in this." If this be true, why is it so, but that happiness lies in the mind, not in conditions? Who will gainsay, that happiness is somewhat which may be earned, but never bartered or got in exchange for some other thing. No lot but has materials of it, because it consists in the way the lot is taken; and truly I never saw any one unhappy in one place who was not discontented in all. Whatever affects life, religion, faith, trust, hope, touches the quick of happiness; for these are the very grounds of happiness whereon it is built, and if any-

thing shake them the house trembles. Riches may come or go and joy be untouched. But it is not so whether love come or go, or whether it be ministered unto while it stays; and so with hope, and faith, and all properties of the soul.

We must be active, and stir ourselves in all ways. For any mode of action may be made to serve happiness; therefore, the more we be active, and in the more ways, so long as we be not dispersed and dissipated, the more modes of happiness we shall have. We shall be happy if we store our minds with knowledge; if we fill ourselves with the best thoughts of the grandest souls harvested for us in books; if we study the facts of nature till her face becomes full of meaning for us, and the grain of sand, the water-drop, the rolling planets, all are joined by thoughts which hold the universe in them; if we turn the eye of observation inward on ourselves, to learn the last lesson of knowledge and wisdom, the worship which is intelligent wonder; the religious awe awaked by mystery divine. To be happy, also, we not only thus must be stored well, own an enlarged and enlightened mind, but we must be active outwardly, use our knowledge usefully, acquiring thus still more mental training. Practical work of some kind must engage us. Activity is itself happiness. The constant, useful exercise of strength, whether mental or physical, is as necessary to happiness of soul as to health of body. I have heard of a tallow chandler, a philosopher, a wise and a happy man I am sure, who in selling out and retiring from business, expressly reserved the right to visit his establishment and oversee the work "*on melting days*"

But not only must the mind and body be active and the soul be putting forth itself in good ways and in many ways (the more ways the better, so that they overlies not each other, whereby all together keep each one ill-followed and half availed of) in order to have happiness, but there are many means and laws of being happy to be considered well. Very good means of happiness, of a general kind, are, 1. To know that it has its means, which must be observed; 2. Not to place it first; 3. To know that it may be reaped plentifully from very small fields and picked forth from little things; 4. To direct the eyes most to the best.

How many persons—a multitude—spend their lives in com-

plaints that they have not happiness or some good things, whereas they will not ask what the means are to obtain them, nor apply the means if they be told what they are. Such persons, if the truth be told, treat nature as thieves would a store-keeper if they should try to snatch, at their own price or for no payment, what the dealer has marked otherwise. "What price?" say they. "So much," answers he, "which is but what it cost, paying for my time and labor." "Nay, indeed," says one, "we should have it for nothing." When the owner neither will give them all the goods for nothing, nor abate his price, which were to give them some for nothing, they fall into a rage and rob him. So do persons with Nature, who rage or rail, not having this or that, but ask not the price of the fine things which they wish, nor make any move to pay for them. But there is this great difference, that thieves may rob a store-keeper, but no one can steal from Nature. Therefore, it is a great means of happiness only to think that there are means of it. Herein many persons err, for they confound happiness with pleasure and think to become joyful by heaping many merry-makings; or else they consider not that happiness is a goal which has paths leading to it, and an end which has means belonging to it, like any other goal or end. These persons miss happiness—the one by mistaking it for what it is not, the other by thinking it will "fall like roasted larks into the mouth" if the jaw but open. La Rochefoucauld avers rightly that "We take less pains to be happy than to appear to be so;" for no one ventures into company with a morose and sour look, but carries a smile though the heart be heavy; and this is either pretense, lest he be turned out of a joyful assembly, or a kind of duty, lest he dim other spirits. But it is little to be doubted that if, whether for wisdom or for kindness (nor indeed could these two fail to be joined), we took as much thought to be happy as to seem so, we as well could do one as the other, for happiness hath its means and will follow on them as music on its laws, or health on its precautions.

Another means of happiness is not to place it first. I must think that happiness, if only we mean nobly by it, is needful and natural food of the mind. Fichte says it is our business "not to achieve happiness, but to deserve it." Ay! and a high saying; but to deserve happiness is to have it in no long time,

and to have the best of it instantly. For the best of happiness is worthiness of it. Wherefore I have no scruple to call noble joys meat of the mind, however some say the contrary. I have read in one writer: "Enjoyment is for children, and beggars, and slaves." I think not so, but rather he who hath not grown into a joyfulness of doing and living, and values not bright and good enjoyment, is yet but a child, and has not the alphabet of the mind; for intelligence works not its best without happiness, more than the body does if starved. It is not one kind of joy that is needful, this kind or that, more than one kind of meat for the body; one may serve if another be not at hand. Yet it is thought variety of food helps body and mind, the one with fresh health and the other with its own strength, which is thought. Not to live on rice alone, or on oats, or wheat, or fruits, but on all together, and with much variety, tops the body with a mind that understands the body. So is it with joys. Not one or a few, but all kinds together, best nourish the soul, and each counts as an element, the missing of which shears some strength. But, now, what if the body place food first and set foremost the stuffing itself therewith? This some do. Then they fill with disease and die. So with the mind, if happiness be placed first. For though happiness be a needful food in its degree, if the soul place it first it is no food, but a poison. Yet it is to be said continually that happiness is needful to complete a noble nourishment of the spirit; for there is a kind of foolish stoical pride, and again a kind of meek weakness, and again a kind of cruel selfishness, which deny the same. Cruel or selfish persons often lay to themselves the comfort that the happiness which either they give not or they snatch away, is not needful, and that their victim will grow well without it. Wherefore it is well to repeat that on some side of the spirit growth will be thwarted, or misshapen, if there be not happiness. Whence it is our duty not to toss to one another this or that happiness, like little balls of pleasure, but to feed joy continuously as a nourishment.

Happiness is not to be considered too much, I say, especially not placed first; else it will be had never at all; for the first things are the glories of the soul, the truth of the heart, the forbearance of the spirit, endurance and fortitude, the faith-

fulness of conscience, the intelligence of mind. Happiness is not the leader of these, but the follower. Yet it is to be esteemed highly, and often the follower may help and feed the leader in his turn, as I have said. "Happiness lies beyond either pain or pleasure—is as sublime a thing as virtue itself," exclaims Mrs. Jameson; which I commend gratefully, because it requires a noble view of happiness. And therefore, Mrs. Jameson says, not only, "as sublime a thing as virtue itself," but adds, "indivisible from it." Yet, so delicate is the moral law, life must be lived under two thoughts, virtue and joy, however they be united in reason. And happiness will not bear to be the first aim, nor much of an aim at all for ourselves, but only for others. And it must be glorified only under a very noble idea of it. A philosopher has said, but very untruly I think: "If we inquire who are the happiest men as a class, we shall find that they are those to whom it is a matter of doubt whether from day to day they shall have enough to eat. The happiest we remember to have seen were the lazzaroni of Naples, whose outward condition is as low and forlorn as that of a man in a civilized community can well be; and the saddest we have known were those whom fortune and their own efforts had raised highest in the social scale." This is but poor reasoning; for the carelessness of the lazzaroni is not to be called happiness, but the lack of a notion of it—as lack of pain is not the same thing as delight, nor being void of hate the same thing as loving. For if we follow this to its end, then if the lazzaroni be happier than the workingmen, the worm is happier than the lazzaroni, and it is better to be a worm than a man. No. The content of the lazzaroni is the abasement of arrested growth; the gloom of the instructed or the fortunate, is the deformity of preverse or monstrous growth. I like the saying of Hawthorne: "There is something more awful in happiness than in sorrow,—the latter being earthly and finite, the former composed of the substance and texture of eternity, so that spirits still embodied may well tremble at it."

Happiness draws this further means to itself, that it may be picked up by any one, being the kernel of a multitude of little things if only we will gather and open them. Wollaston, in his "Religion of Nature," has phrased excellently this common thought. He says we consider not enough "the silent pleasures



of a lower fortune, arising from temperance, moderate desires, easy reflections, a consciousness of knowledge and truth, with other pleasures of the mind." Great loves, thoughts, labors, achievements and other such-like experiences are the great things of life which bear vast joys; but the modest pleasures that spring variously, plentifully, at the feet of those few great oaks, like scattered wild flowers—'tis well to bend to them, to inhale them, give thanks for them. The very great unutterable joys have always a measure of pain; they are so great that we must pay that price for them. Always there is a shadow; and unutterableness is itself a kind of woe. But the little things are often pure and unalloyed pleasures. I like these words from Fielding's "Amelia:" "I know," said he, "it must appear dull in description, for who can describe the pleasures which the morning air gives to one in perfect health; the flow which springs up from exercise; the delights which parents feel from the prattle and innocent follies of their children; the joy with which the tender smile of a wife inspires a husband; or, lastly, the cheerful, solid comfort which a fond couple enjoy in each other's conversation?" This abundance of drops of happiness, like rain, if we will but gather them, is the meaning of the New Year greeting or of the like thereof at birthdays or other such times. For why say we not "A happy life to you," or, "Many happy new years;" but this we say not, but, A happy New Year; which is to say, another happy year, thinking only of one. Now this is because happiness lies in the present instant, and never is to be had save as we use the moment aright; and whether the moment hold great things or small things, alike they are but blocks shaped for the one palace of happiness. For who can not build with what he can hold in his hand can not build at all. And who can hold the past when it is gone, or the future when it is not come? A poet says:

Let what thou hast abide before thine eyes  
And to thy heart come homeward, like thy blood.

Again it is great means of happiness to direct the eyes rightly; for we may see anything we look after. Life is like a museum, or like a gallery of pictures. One may look at all of the things, and all the paintings, for knowledge; but for joy one must return to the lovely or the favorite and stay before it. I



know not in what men differ more than in this. It has been my habit to observe the unhappy curiously; and, indeed, hardly have I known any unhappy person who made not himself wretched by looking for mean things, and fastening his eyes on them, notwithstanding the good things plentiful and close by. Plutarch says, admirably: "Aristippus, when he lost a noble farm, asked one of his dissembling friends who pretended to be sorry for his misfortune, not only with regret but with impatience; 'Thou hast but one piece of land, but have I not three farms yet remaining?' He assented to the truth of it. 'Why, then,' said Aristippus, 'should I not rather lament your misfortune, since it is only the raving of a mad man to be concerned at what is lost, and not rather rejoice in what is left.'" Happiness lies thus so much in our eyes, as we look in one way or another, that La Rochefoucauld has written with his usual shrewdness; "None are either so happy or so unhappy as they imagine." Yet, truly, it is their imagining which is their wretchedness; they are just so miserable as they conceive, and no more. I think the shrewd Frenchman has the truth if only we write "appear," for "imagine." For what is harder than to read pain and pleasure aright, and measure their degrees? For some hide their grief, and some noisily advertise it. Some, again, enjoy with quiet fervor, as the tide moves; but others boisterously, and perhaps frothily, as waves toss. Moreover, with these divers ways of expression, many have great differences of nature, so that whether any one be silent or loud, we know not how little or how great the feeling, unless his nature be understood by us. Wollaston has said, "If one man can carry a weight of 400 or 500 pounds as well as another can a weight of 100, by their different weights they will be equally loaded. And so the poverty or disgrace, the same wounds, etc., do not give the same pain to all men. The apprehension of but a vein to be opened is worse to some than the apparatus to an execution is to others; and a word may be more terrible and sensible to tender natures than the sword is to the senseless or intrepid breed." Therefore, as I have said, men may be neither so full of pleasure nor so wrenched by pain as they seem. But whatever truly they imagine, that they suffer; and what they fix their sight on, that afterward they will imagine. He is

blessed who has learned to turn his eyes to the lovely and not the hideous. For nature, which includes humanity, has such an abundance of both kinds that a man may keep either before his eyes as he will; but it is pitiful to snuff in dark corners when one may draw breath on hills.

I have said much now (and yet for the theme but little) of the gold mine of happiness each one has in himself if only he will sift the soil in that mine. But now I must speak of the means of happiness which relate to others, and arise from our living with our fellow beings. For we are not alone. "No man liveth to himself," nor can; but as unto God, "in whom we live," so unto our fellows, who live in him. Other persons throng about us, compete with us, jostle us, serve us, oblige us to serve them, talk with us and about us, love us, hate us, help, harm, warn, betray, cheat us, and deal honestly with us. There is no peace or blessing for us, no New Year hope, no all-the-year joy, unless our heart go out to all the persons kindly and to some of them with dear love. "It is not *necessary* that we should be loved, it is *necessary* that we should love," if we would be happy. And with this love, either for all who are our fellow-children in God, or for the few who are our dearest, must go service. Else our love is a base mockery, a mask, as unhallowed as a selfish prayer. Thus I delight in the New Year greeting because it is a benediction with promise. If one wish another a happy New Year according to this custom of the season, this is not to be thought a greeting breathed without obligation, but rather the acknowledgement of a tie, office and duty, which join one to another. For if I wish happiness to another, but will take no step toward him when his path crosses mine, I deserve Wordsworth's judgment, that it is, "a greeting where no kindness is," and no more than a false and empty sound. This is plain if we reflect that we have little power to arrange happiness for ourselves, but much power for others. "Whether," it has been said well, "any particular day shall bring to you more of happiness or of suffering is largely beyond your power to determine. Whether each day of your life shall give happiness or suffering rests with yourself." Whoever has the power to lift must answer for burdens, and who bids another a Happy New Year, joining therewith no due of service, is no better than a runaway

or traitor; for he has professed a loyalty which has no weight in his heart, and in his deeds no place. This greeting, therefore, taxes sincerity. Jeremy Bentham says, excellently: "The way to be comfortable is to make others comfortable. The way to make others comfortable is to appear to love them. The way to appear to love them is to love them in reality." Ah! what happiness loving service awakes in us, or what joy it adds to joy already awaked! A poet has said that "When the power of imparting joy is equal to the will, the human soul requires no other heaven." Why then in heaven we are, for love hath this power. A friend wrote to another, "Thou art my daily bread." Yet both were poor and had little but love to give. But such power had love to feed! "Little but love," say I! That is as if a warm coast were to say to the sun, "I have naught for thee whereof to make rain for me, naught but this ocean!" And with the power of love to give joy goes the greatest of joys, the giving. I have met a saying of Hooker, "The greatest felicity that felicity hath is to spread." And the vast, glorious, often proud though humble, exalted happiness that comes of loving and giving love's service; hath a great spread. No one can say whither it widens or what it does, what songs it makes, what voices repeats like echoes in hills that never cease reverberations. "In a man whose childhood has known caresses," says George Eliot, "there is always a fibre of memory that can be touched to gentle issues." We are wise if we enliven our children unto the habit of offering each other those attentions and endearments which make home so bright now, as if a sun resided in it, and gild the whole life, as a high sun floods the whole ocean in an instant, leaving no single shadow on its round breast, no, not so much as of one wave on another.

But the human heart prizes not only to love but to be loved. This is not necessary, as I have said, but it is very joyful, great riches, humble thankfulness, strong cheer, and able even to make cheerful strength. From the love of friends comes a great part of the happiness of the New Year, and of all years. 'Tis well to bethink us of this simple truth, so as by reflection and by faithfulness to know how great the joy may be.

What a poem, creation power, beatitude, may two persons

make for each other who are faithful at heart? Yea, what an axis with the two ends of it pointing starward, on which the earth turns joyfully, full of seasons, flowers and fruits! All that love needs is pure personal faithfulness; which is the same as to say that it must be the golden love of another with no base vein of self-love. Then its power to embosom, hold, give life, is like the air. Such a golden love has made fast to its fellow, let us say, in some golden glow of joy, success, pride or splendor. The joy wanes. The love cleaves. Grief comes apace. The love cleaves. Health and strength are broken in labor. The love cleaves. Sickness and weakness seize the broken body. The love cleaves. Riches like swarms of summer birds take wings and fly. The love cleaves. Poverty and distress, like nocturnal bats come in on leathern wings. The love cleaves. Praise, popularity, and influence, quick caught, quick lost, fly from the ruined fortunes. The love cleaves. Loneliness, neglect, floutings, and unbefriended labors throng, crowd and overpower. The love cleaves. Yea, mayhap character stumbles, temptations twist too hard, and reputation first halts, then flies. The love cleaves. Such love is grand, such friendship is mighty for joy—that changes places and things as must be, yet knoweth no changing. It is like the sea, like the unity of great waters that wash a thousand coasts as may happen, but is not altered. For however it come to frowning rocks or to abased swamps, or to desert sands, or blooming gardens, it is the same sea! and however it float a rich proud ship or a little shallop, it is the same sea! Good love is like this! True friendship is such an ocean—the same, whatever coast of fortune the tide flood.

And now one source of joy I must speak of, ending this sermon of “A Happy New Year”—the place, in the heart and in the life of man, of the thought of Him, the Father, the Eternal, to whom “a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.” The highest source of happiness, the issue and end of all others, is the part and place, in our lives and in our souls, of the thought of God. Mental and moral truths are so deep and great, the facts of life and of experience so mighty and vast, that the words which belong to them we have to speak lightly or easily, but little conscious of them, meaning only a bit of their meaning—as one who swims in the sea may

sport on the surface and toss the spray about, but would be sobered and awed if he could conceive the depth and life under him. We can speak such words—love, thought, faith, hope, heroism, joy, sorrow—only in part, yea, and at each moment live them and know them only in part. So it is with the thought of God and the speaking of that name. If but once we could speak it, *feeling* what it means! But we can have but one feeling, one thought of it, at a time, and that feeling and thought only on the surface of them. Yet if we can stop, be still, be very still in soul for a little, cease *trying* to live, and *live* an instant, what awe, joy, trust, love, peace and power come over us with the thought of God!

The part and place within us of that thought is the deep of all deeps of happiness, I have said; but who can tell this part and place, who can sound the deeps, who sink into them to know them? Who even then could give them words, or by one word, the Everlasting Name, gather all the truth into one moment of life in us? But it is strength and greatness, divinity, joy, to be very still and speak the Name.

I will try to utter a little part of the place and power of that thought within us—I mean, trust in God. There is no comfort, peace and stay so mighty as trust in God, and no joy greater. I have been speaking of means of happiness in ourselves and also around us in other men. But if we look for joys in our own minds, in growth, knowledge, love, these are not complete nor have reached their stature till they fly up to God. We begin, we are young and ignorant, we are in a nest, looking over the edge of it and knowing only what thence we can peep at; but we come truly to our joy when we have grown stout of wing to soar away, to see the earth from a height, to be in the heavens, when knowledge and love fly up unto worship, and we know the mystery of ourselves in the mystery of God. But if, again, we look outward to others, and seek joy in love and sympathy and service, giving and receiving it, if in this we succeed, it is encompassed in the Infinite Love, nor know we the greatest and true joy of it till we “love God and our friend in God and our enemy for God.” But if in our venture for human love we succeed not, if we find only where to give love but not whence to receive it, then indeed we must go for joy to such a thought of God as



knows and affirms mightily his presence of goodness and love in outward circumstances as well as in inward experience, his mercy even in the pain and the loss, his eternal goodness, on which we may cast the future with trust though we cannot expound the present. We can not be happy or quiet without *some* faith; trust in God is the deep of all trusts, pure faith. This is a supreme joy if it take hold of our souls simply and fervently. The pure sense of gratefulness unto Him, for ourselves, for others, for Himself, that things are as they are, that

"If we would pray,  
We've naught to say  
But this, that God may be God still;  
For Him to live  
Is still to give,  
And sweeter than my wish His will"—

this is itself a source of purest happiness, of serene life.

Joy that can not be shaken or touched we have, when we behold him in the heavens and the earth, "see him *with our eyes*," as the Zoroastrians said, and know that Will is Law and Law is Will, and Law is Love and Love is Law, "named with the Everlasting Name;" and that there is no holier time or spot than this moment and this place, for he lives in all, and he "speaketh, not spake."

Shall the New Year bring Joy,  
Shall it bring Fear,  
Shall it bring Weal or Woe—  
'Tis sure 'tis here.

But this is not more sure  
Than that the vast  
To-Come is filled with Him  
Who filled the Past.

Father, we pray to Thee!  
And in our Heart  
Say not "Thou wast," "Wilt be,"—  
Only "Thou art."



## A HYMN.

Now the New Year  
Holy and hale is here!

But the Old Year—  
It will not disappear!

The New's begun,  
And yet the Old's not done.

Ever doth stay  
What once hath filled a Day.

And what doth part  
That once hath filled a Heart?

The Past doth lie  
Ambered in Memory;

So to Gems drest,  
To lie upon the Breast.

How rich is He,  
Eterne Divinity,

Who brings all New,  
Yet all the Old leaves too!

## A PRAYER.

Father, Thou art Eternity!  
And of Thee is Time!  
And of Thee are we, Thy Children.  
Thy Children, who of Thee have Time,  
Look up to Thee Who art Eternity.



## THE UNDERTONE OF LIFE.

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All my members are as a shadow.—Job xvii, 7.

Job means that so he has grown weak and his flesh melted away that his limbs seem as thin and unsubstantial as a shadow. He has become as if transparent and vapor-like, being so extenuated and wasted.

There is an island in the Eastern seas—so runs an ethereal fancy—where all the people have but shadowy members. The only solid and tangible parts are the vital organs in the interior of the body. All that covers these and spreads out from them into members is shadow; the features, arms, legs, all, are but delicate, misty emanations, translucent, spirit-like. So they continue, serving the people for all purposes, till the hour comes for the event which, in this happy isle, answers to death. Then quietly what was but half visible before, a mere shape as delicate as a white outline in a white fog, melts into invisibleness and there is left only the vital organs which have been covered by the spiritual veil of the members. Then—so runs the fancy of the story—are called in the wise men whose business it is to study and describe the condition of these vital organs; and their report is made public and becomes the good or evil fame of the person. The people take no account in their funeral orations, histories, chaplets of fame, reputations, of what deeds the shadowy members have done, but only of the actual condition of the vital parts, the internal enginery, when the airy members have dissolved into the atmosphere.

I will take Job's exclamation, "All my members are as a shadow," for the purpose of this discourse, in the sense of this grave, strange fancy of the shadowy people of the Eastern island.

And I will speak, not of our bodily, but of our spiritual and moral lives, as seems intended by the figurative fancy in the story.

This is my meaning, that with every man there is a vital undertone of life, compared to which all his deeds, works, labors, his thoughts, notions, affections, pleasures, pains, all whatsoever he puts forth, are but members. His body of substance, his real life, is this undertone. All else whatever, howsoever active or visible, is but the members which are only like moving shapes or parts spreading out from this central life. They strike the senses, invade the feelings, attack the judgment by their motions; but after a time they show how shadowy they are by melting away into the air. Then is left bare only the undertone, the vital truth of the nature, which is the real and substantial being. A man may seem gay and blithe. This is a member. 'Tis still a question what the vital fact, the undertone, is. He may live in honesty as to his dealings, he may speak the truth. These are members. 'Tis yet to be known what the undertone is. He may be charitable and generous in act, give lavishly, spread benefactions. These are members. 'Tis still to be asked what the undertone is. He may go on in life proper in all things, prudent, well-mannered, respectable, staid, solid, clean-shaven. 'Tis to be mooted still what the undertone is, the reality of his life, the state of the vital centre.

For the soul is like to the body and the body to the soul in its laws and methods. If we see strong members in the body, good vigor, bright color, we say with fair warrant that the body is sound and healthful; else how put forth and maintain such members? If we see good deeds, bright cheer, courage, honesty, sobriety, we say with good warrant that the soul is sound and healthful and these members of fair deeds spring from deep true motives, which are the soul's health. But sometimes the members of the body seem strong and fine, while all the time the body is unsound, deeply and centrally diseased; and suddenly the deep sickness breaks forth with destruction, or after an unaccountable death, we search and behold on what a marsh of decay those fine members were reared; and what supported them we cannot tell; or the members themselves look very fine and show well, but are weak, and fail if they be put to strain. So some-

times in the soul's life we see fine appearances, members that show well, deeds that seem excellent, honesty that looks sterling, manners that have a bright hue as of fresh, good blood, while all the time, in the very fact of it, in the undertone, the life is false and wretched; the members well trimmed for the eye, but the life not true in the soul. This is what Jesus compared to graves and tombs, that by their very office and nature are kept fine on the outside, but inwardly are noisome and sickening.

It is easy to cloak anything till it look well. I care not what grinning skeleton it be, clothe it up and mask it, and it will look as well as any fine body. So that under like velvets, and under gold sashes one as fine as the other, there may be as great difference as life and death.

Very common and sober truth it is that not what we seem to be by manner or look or deeds, but what we are in very truth, is the great issue in life—not what be the members which we put forth and flourish, which “are but as a shadow,” but what is the undertone of life, wherein is our substance and reality. This is very common and very sober simple truth, I say. Perhaps some will say, “Has the preacher nothing fresher to say than such an old truth? ’Tis an old saw that hath been crooned by every good granny since the flood!” ’Tis so. I am preaching naught new or surprising, naught to stir you with a sensation. ’Tis no new wine I bring you, but an old and well-recognized vintage. But always a remedy, a medicine, may be said to be fresh when it is what the disease needs, although the sickness have broken out ten thousand times before. What kind of a physician were he who should seek evermore a new medicine to displace one already proved in the same malady? Therefore, though this which I preach be an old truth, ’tis no older than the disease, and is now as fresh and new as the disease, and therefore to be repeated over and over till the sickness yield,—the truth that all the deeds of men that look fine and show so flourishingly, are but members, only “as a shadow” of the reality. The reality is the undertone of life, the vital truth of character and motive, from which the members grow; and by this they are good or bad, however they may appear; weak or strong, whatever be their look; noble or ignoble, however they seem. The great question is: What is a man at the center? What is his vital life? What the under-

tone? The undertone of the life may be revealed truly by the members, which are the deeds or the visible affections. But also the outward members may not show truly what the real undertone is. They may seem good, when the aim and thought are careless or bad. Then it is the aim and motive which make the undertone of life. For two men may do the very same act at the same time in the same case. In both it is but a member, a shadow. In both the act may seem a good one or a bad one, a member healthful or a member diseased. In both the one question is,—What is the undertone of life, the reality? And if this be different, then though they do the same act at the same moment in the same matter, it may be noble in one, ignoble in the other.

Says Thackeray:—"I never could count how many causes went to produce any given effect or action in a person's life, and have been for my own part many a time quite misled in my own case, fancying some grand, some magnanimous, some virtuous reason, for an act of which I was proud; when lo! some pert little satirical monitor springs up inwardly, upsetting the fond humbug which I was cherishing—the peacock's tail wherein my absurd vanity had clad itself—and says, "Away with this boasting! I am the cause of your virtue, my lad. You are pleased that yesterday at dinner you refrained from the dry champagne. My name is Worldly Prudence, not self-denial, and I caused you to refrain. You are pleased because you gave a guinea to Diddler! I am Laziness, not generosity, which inspired you. You hug yourself because you resisted other temptation! Coward! It was because you dared not run the risk of the wrong. Out with your peacock's plumage! Walk off in the feathers which nature gave you, and thank Heaven they are not altogether black."

Yes, this is very sober truth,—that not just acts but justice, not honest payments but honesty, not lively tones but cheerful faith, not any fair-looking members but the vital parts, the undertone of life, are the condition and source of health and sincerity or of weakness and pretense.

Now this undertone of life, as it is the source of true distinctions in morals, so it is the fountain of joy or of pain, of the strong life in the members that goes with good joy, or of that struggle or hindered office of them that comes of misery. This



specially is what I wish to set forth to you now,—this, that it is the undertone of life which is the vast source of happiness, if we be happy; and that we can not be happy, we can only be gay or riotous, if the undertone of our life be sorrowful or bad. It needs no saying indeed that if the undertone of our life be joyful and good, and our conditions good, we shall be happy. But mayhap it needs some enforcing that if the conditions be pleasant and blithe, but the undertone of our life sad, darkened, the good conditions can not drag us much out of that undertone; and on the other side, if the conditions be hard and painful, but the undertone be good, serene, grateful, joyful, the hard or sad conditions cannot stop the strong outbreak and overflow of that undertone; but it will swell like a freshet of waters from the hills, and stream over the hard conditions. It is not the *instances* of sadness, not this pain, or that struggle, not this loss, that privation, this disappointment, or anon another grief—not these that work mischief with us, but the steady undertone of life, whether *that* be love and joy and truth, or false or cold or woeful.

The reason of this power and virtue of the undertone is what I would have you think of much and earnestly; this reason, namely, that *it is into the undertone of our lives that we settle back at every unoccupied moment*. The instant the attention is released, back into the undertone we fall. If we have been intent on a task, and full of the happy exercise of power which goes with intent effort, when the task is finished, we drop instantly to the undertone. If during the task we rest a moment, drop the tool, lay down the pen, cease the argument, down go we to the undertone, like the swoop of a bird when the wings poise at rest. Nay, it needs but an instant of pause; in that instant, in but a hesitation, but a look up from the desk, a glance aside from the tool, if the attention flag an instant, down are we in the undertone with the infinite speed of gravitation. Sometimes the undertone is but a *state*, sad or joyful, grave or blithe, earnest or trifling, selfish or generous, cold or loving, spiritual or sensual, intellectual or vacant. Sometimes a *special train of thought*, an habitual subject of reflection, a constant brooding or musing in one direction, makes a part of the undertone and joins with the disposition. Perhaps this is so in all persons in the measure of their activity of mind. “Every man,” says Dugald Stewart, “has

some peculiar train of thought which he falls back upon when he is alone. This to a great degree molds the man." And not only, I add, when he is alone, but though he be compassed with crowds of men, nay, though he be beset with talk, in the midst of conversation or discourse, if his attention flag and thus he be freed an instant, back falls he to his undertone and the "train of thought" in it. And not only trains of thought, I add again, but vans of memory may be in the undertone, or feed it mainly. But whether the undertone be but disposition, tendency, state, or be active with habitual reflections, or deep with wells of memory, it is all one. At every pause of labor, every suspense of attention, we fall into the undertone instantly, as if it were our real life (as in truth it is), and the labors, deeds, or the attention fixed awhile on somewhat, were but dreams, members which "are as a shadow," from which we awake to our perpetual life in the undertone.

If, now, we fall into the undertone of us, whatever it be, at every instant of ceasing from active exercise of mind,—if, I say, I may liken the mind to a living body that can stand on two legs so long as it is alive or awake, but if it sleep for an instant, falls over to mother earth,—then what great matter it is whether the fall to the undertone help or hinder us in the task we have to do, or in the large task of living in our lot. We are at work, I say, and stop a moment to breathe, or we are thinking, drawing, composing, and for a turn of the head, the stretch of a limb, our attention relaxes, and we rush into our undertone of life like a meteor to the earth. Forth we come again to the labor, the argument, the art, the composition, the responsibility of the instant, whatever it be. What a vast difference it makes whether by that plunge into the undertone of us we be the more free or the more hampered for the duties to which we come back. For this sudden immersion in the undertone happens many times each day, many times in an hour belike; and so many times we come back from it to our tasks or places as swiftly as we fell into it; wherefore many times each day, or many times in an hour belike, we are braced or unbraced, girded up or relaxed, refreshed or more disabled, strengthened or enfeebled, heartened or disheartened, set aflame or choked with ashes. Do we look at this fact enough? Is it not a deep and sober truth? Is it possible

to say what difference in those members which "are as a shadow," what great differences in deeds, in things accomplished, in aims set high or low, in hopes, in dreams, in loves, in all the manifold responsibilities of life—what differences in them, I say, to make them good or bad, base or noble, come of these continual swift reparings to our undertone, if so be these help us, or hinder us. This is a deep and momentous thing! Think of it. We work, we cease a moment, we lean on our tool, we lounge back in our chair, but an instant, maybe, but a sigh, a breath, a look about us; but in that instant, by the flash of an idleness over the attention, by the momentary loosing of a strained will, we are hurled into our undertone and bathed in strength or weakness to go on with our occupation. Surely so great a moral fact as this will explain many glories and many shames, many failures and many achievements, many feeble sinkings under trials, many shining triumphs.

Here also I must turn to our great effect on each other. What etherial subject, indeed, leads not to this conclusion. But none more than the undertone of life, its laws and powers. What if the undertone of life be deep sadness of heart? What if it be a pervading solemn sorrow of that incurable kind which treacherous or untender or loveless companions may inflict? What if thou or I have made such an undertone for any one? Bethink you—it is not this pain, that stroke, or anon some other blow, which all cease soon, that make sadness, but the steady undertone; because, however we live in work or in pleasures, these must stop sometimes, or the attention will flag from them at many moments, and then we fall, like a weight dropt from an eagle's beak, into the sea of our undertone. Bethink us, then, what we may do to one another by hurts and shocks of love, by faithlessness, hardness, unkindness, selfishness. For if these be many and long, sometime they will pass beyond *hurts* and become *hurt*, beyond pains and blows to be settled pain and laceration; and they settle thus from single blows and hurts to an undertone *suddenly*. With some one blow too many, the point is overpassed, the weight over-piled, and down sink they to be an undertone of the life. What an infliction then you have done, when you have wrought not merely a smart, a pang, on some one, but such an undertone as is pain and sorrow at every stop in labor, every rest of attention.

But this has its glorious converse. Where in nature is there aught all black? What to be found but runs into light if we will, or if we wait, or if we understand? The Infinite is as a Sun of Light, and every finite thing is as a sphere unto the light, which must be illumined on one side if on the other it be dark. As thus we may create a sad undertone, so we may make in another person a joyful undertone, which hath the same power to enliven and refresh which the sad has to wear and waste. By gentle lovingness, faithfulness, watchfulness, which droppeth "like the gentle dew from heaven," we may bestow an undertone of life on another which is like light, like a sea of the sun; wherein when he falls back at the flaggings of attention or the pauses of labor, it will be to come up strong and glowing and blest, like Yima from bathing in the billows of the sun's ocean. And as you can not divine the one fatal last blow by which your blows amass to become an undertone of pain, so you can not tell the blessed moment when your loving kindness shall sink with a gravity like gold to be a warm and beautiful undertone of life, giving strength and joy forever.

Many kinds of undertone of life and character there are, such as the cold or the tender, the selfish, the immoral, the remorseful, and much were to be said of each. But in this one sermon I cannot. Only of one kind farther will I speak. I mean the undertone which is ideality. It is a great matter to us whether our undertone of life be one of ideality. Surely you know what this means. It is the state of soul which judges things purely and for themselves; not by their visible results so much; not by the fact of there being visible results, or none, as it may be; not by the amount of outward return for outward expense, not by popularity or votes and verdicts, or numbers, or power or station; but altogether by the simple truth, virtue, beauty, sincerity, grace, exaltation of the things themselves. Ideality is belief in the mightiness of a thought, the power of an idea, as being the strength of God. It is

"The instinct that can tell  
That God is on the field when he  
Is most invisible!"

Noble words these of the hymn, and yet I would say more. Ideality is the instinct to which God never is "invisible," but always

plainly "on the field." When Jesus said such words as, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work," "For this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth," "These words of mine are like a house builded on a rock," then was he full of the ideal and of the might of it, not counting on powers, principalities, possessions, courting naught, bespeaking nothing, but only pouring forth the soul's supremacy and the simple truth, and saying, "This is of God; ye have no power at all against it," and never counting "one accent of the Holy Ghost," lost even when naught could be heard of it for the scoffs at the cross. Ideality is to believe in the power of God, by which "no good thing is failure and no evil thing success, however things may seem." Ideality judges the thing itself in the light of the soul and can stand with a few joyfully, and hath a vision far beyond powers or princes who triumph at the instant. And ideality never barter any truth or virtue or simple grace, which is *real* power, for applause or riches or company or assemblies, which are but ghosts of force.

Now, it is great matter to us to have ideality for the undertone of life. We must live in the practical, the pressing, the material, we must consort with powers and possessions and pretences, we must deal with riches, with ambitions, with those who think to rule by riches or by force or by cunning or by wit, with crowds and majorities, in fields of compromises and submission, we must struggle with work that falls short, we must be helpless very often, we must meet "wrong on the throne" honored and done homage, "right on the scaffold" mocked and done to death, we must be beset with calls to us and pushes against us to veer a little from the simple and pure way of the truth, to bow and do homage to the idol of the hour lest the crowd hustle us. These things meet us in ten thousand ways, in the home, in the church, in the store, in politics. Happy for us then if we have faith in a pure thought. This is to have an undertone steady and strong of ideality, wherein we say, "I can not argue about prices or numbers or majorities, the wish or applause or purchase of men; but I know simply that this thing which is demanded is not noble, and therefore is seeded with death, and that this other thing, which now is hooted or trampled or neglected, is noble and ideal, and therefore is eternized of God." If such be our undertone, then in the daily strife, in the temptations, the sneers,



jibes, bribes, at every moment of rest, every blessed pause, slumber of will, relaxing of attention, we shall fall back into the undertone of ideality, and come forth as if washed in a river of Paradise. We shall sink into the undertone as we fall asleep, when the will holily lets go its watch. We shall awake in the undertone, before the attention has begun its alertness. This is to be familiar with eternity, with "the sources of astonishment and power."

One lovely and helpful gift of God to us in the undertone, a Theodore or Theodora, I must not fail to mention. I mean that a beautiful and beloved person may make a part of our undertone of life with great gladness to us, a very lovely source of joy, refreshment, power and grace. Sometimes there may be many persons. 'Tis well so, but it is also great and good if there be few, or one be beyond all others. It is possible and blessed to have such an image, or such images, in us that at every pause of labor, every suspense of attention, we fall suddenly into an undertone which is dear and pure company, bright forms, angelic association, inspiring love. This is very possible, day by day, for years, for life, and is full of joy, of help, of revival, of wonder and gladness, strength, ideals, and songs of thanks. "Love" says a poet, "can sun the realms of light;" and another says love is "a discovering of the infinite in the finite."

And now, once more, in this sermon, as in many, yea, all, we must come to the one thought, the thought of thoughts, in which is all joys and all sorrows, all need and all power, "life, death and immortality"—the thought of God. May I not say, reverently and solemnly, that the thought of God may be the undertone of life in us, if we will, if we strive, love, pray, lift ourselves upward—may we not say this? In very truth—the greatest of truths—it is possible that God be the undertone of life in us! In the morning we may awake, and with whatever bliss of love or success, triumph, hope, expectation, or what pain, sorrow, doubt, fear, soon we may say, "This light is from the same source as the darkness when I fell asleep." If we labor all day, how hard soever, how struggling and doubtful soever, not seeing our way clearly, we may say in the pauses, "I am working with the same Strength and amid the same Laws which did bestead me yesterday." If we have refreshments, sweet love, dear voices,



pleasant sympathies, gleams of successes, we may say, between happy sighs, "These joys come to me very steadily and are all from One Source, and every day they are here." When we lie down at night, and one more day is done, sleep near, weariness blissful, just before we fall into slumber, we shall fall into our undertone belike, and it may be this thought, "The darkness and the light are both alike to him," or "He hath beset me behind and before, and laid his hand upon me," or "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts," or "This rest and sleep and night-tabernacle are from the same One who awoke me this morning to light, strength and labor." And when again with the day we awake, belike we come from our undertone and to it we may rush back for an instant from the mighty morning on the earth, and God may be in the undertone, and we may say, "Again he cometh," or "Surely never he hath left me, for he was by when I fell to slumber, and now again here he is," or "He is the same yesterday and to-day," or "In his light we see light." It is possible so to live, so hope, love, pray, and think, and think upward, that every pause shall sink us into an undertone which sinks into God—not with exclamation or a prayer, or even thinking of prayer or of naming any thought with the Eternal Name, but with "a spirit composed to love,"

"With reverential resignation,  
No wish conceived, no thought expressed!  
Only a *sense* of supplication,  
A sense o'er all my soul imprest,  
That I am weak, yet not unblest,  
Since in me, round me, everywhere  
Eternal Strength and Wisdom are!"

And to the poet we must add, not only a sense of *supplication* but of fulness, of mysterious blessedness which leaves naught to entreat or to conceive; and not only of finite weakness, but of infinite strength, a glorious sense of power and light lifting us as if all heaven were dissolved into a flood to roll under us. It is possible, if we alight in lovely joys, and catch our breath for bliss, to fall by that pause into an undertone where hath grown habitual a reverent thought of what joy means. If pleasures fly around us like birds of gay feathers, and we await a jocund moment that comes dancing to us, it is possible to fall, by that pause into an undertone (as fall we shall into some) which is a sweet thank-

fulness of remembrance "that no man liveth to himself," but "unto God" and "his friends in God and his enemies for God." It is possible, if sorrow befall us, in the pause while a tear is dropping, to sink into an undertone which by discipline is a holy quiet, patience, adoration, in which lives the thought of God, the Almighty Love and Faithfulness. It is possible, if temptation fall on us, and we stand shocked, trembling, by that pause to sink into a deep in us where is the thought of the Infinite Holiness which is the rebuke of all evil. There is a solemn sense of life, a deep feeling of our significance one unto another, a divine habitude of joy, a bliss of dependence and bliss of independence, a glorifying of beauty, a reverence, veneration, lowliness, love, with sometimes the Eternal Name—which all is the thought of God in us. It is possible that God shall be the undertone of life.

Now, if the right undertone be a point of so great moment to us, we must ask how to attain it, how elevate and chasten it. To this question, of course, there is one general answer, that every good deed enobles us. Flying forth from us, it has power to come back to us with virtue and inhabit us. Every good and true act which we do, being done and gone from sight, sinks into the undertone to empty there its freight of goodness. This is a great and exalting truth, that

"What is excellent,  
As God lives, is permanent."

A noble hymn sings a song of strength, triumph and riches because every soul is "heir of all ages," able to draw on itself for all that æons "have wrought," "every golden deed," all labors and prayers, passions and tears, "faith sublime,"

"Aspirations pure and high  
Strength to do and to endure."\*

Like to each soul which is heir of all the ages, the undertone of life is heir of the goodness of every good deed of us. It receives the power of every noble act nobly acted, which is to say, done

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\* Heir of all the ages, I,—  
Heir of all that they have wrought!  
All their store of emprise high,  
All their wealth of precious thought!

with sincerity. This is a great truth, full for us of courage, consolation, exaltation. Yet it may be helpful if I divide this precept into four special answers to the question how to attain to a noble and pure undertone of life, how to exalt and chasten it:

1. By striving to do naught but from a *good motive*. For the deeds are only the members which "are as a shadow." The undertone, the soul of them, the true body of life, is the motive. Therefore to see to it that we satisfy ourselves with no fair deeds from sordid purposes and selfish aims, deeds truly fraudulent, fine-seeming and base-aiming, but to keep the motive always pure—this exercises the undertone in its true virtue, rectifies and enobles it.

2. By *secret* faithfulness. I mean by this two forms of private worthiness. One form is the doing of any duty or labor just as faithfully and scrupulously, unwitnessed, or even unknown, unpraised, unrewarded, as under the eye and commendation of a master. The other form is, the doing quietly and diligently whatever good comes in our way, or can be sought by us, without publication of our good act, and even hiding it—the virtue counseled by Jesus in the saying, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Secret faithfulness has very great power to amend and enoble the undertone of life, because it can spring possibly from naught but good and high motive.

3. By striving watchfully and lovingly to think of others

Every golden deed of theirs  
Sheds its luster on my way;  
All their labors, all their prayers,  
Sanctify this present day.

Heir of all that they have earned  
By their passion and their tears;  
Heir of all that they have learned  
Through the weary, toiling years;

Heir of all the faith sublime  
On whose wings they soared to heaven;  
Heir of every hope that Time  
To earth's fainting sons hath given;

Aspirations pure and high;  
Strength to do and to endure;  
Heir of all the ages, I,—  
Lo, I am no longer poor?

*Julia C. Dorr.*

first and most and of ourselves second and least. The cause of the power of this goodness on the undertone is the same as before, namely that it *must* be good *in itself*, and can be no otherwise; for if our preference of others spring from a bad motive, which is to say, from an interested purpose or regard to our own ends, then we are *not* thinking of others but of *ourselves*.

4. By seeking the beautiful, revering it, learning to love it and rejoice in it. For beauty, of whatever kind, in sky or sea or land, or feature, form, complexion, spirit, in body or in mind, is to be loved only for itself. It can not be revered or loved except for itself, which is to say, with a pure motive. For if a beautiful thing be prized for some service it may do, then it is the service which is valued, not the beauty which is loved. Nay, the beauty then is like not even to be seen or known. "Everything which in any way is beautiful," says Marcus Aurelius, "is beautiful in itself and terminates in itself not having praise as part of itself. \* \* \* That which is really beautiful has no need of anything; not more than law, not more than truth, not more than benevolence or modesty. Which of these things is beautiful because it is praised, or spoiled by being blamed? Is such a thing as an emerald made worse than it was, if it be not praised? or gold, ivory, purple, a lyre, a little knife, a flower, a shrub?" Because beauty thus is simple, elemental, and not to be loved, nay nor even beheld or known, unless loved for its own sake, with a holy adoration, to learn to love beauty and to know it, with rapture, is a mighty exercise of reality in us, a heavenly training of sincerity, of pure devotion and simple earnestness. It is always an assertion of the ideal, of the glory of grace which hath no end but simply to be, to rejoice the soul, to draw worship, to show divinity, yes, and only to *be* divinity where there are none to see and adore, like rain

" In the wilderness wherein there is no man,  
To satisfy the desolate and waste ground,  
And cause the tender herb to spring forth."

Beauty is not to be sold; for he who would buy, can buy the object, but not the beauty of it, unless he have the soul to know it, and love it. Wherefore to learn to love all beauty, to revere it, and rejoice in it, is to rectify the soul by simplicity, by directness, by ideality and pure motive and genuine love. Whatever

thus draws the soul to the simple and elemental, to what is to be loved only with most pure and unmixed motive, or else not even is beheld, and to be loved with great joy and rapture, or else not is loved at all, this, by being so very pure, so unmixed, central, perfect, is very powerful to exhalt and chasten the undertone of life. Also beauty never stops but in the infinite. Whatever is fair is the shadow of a fairer. "I am of the opinion," said Cicero, "that there is naught so beautiful but there is something still more beautiful, of which this is the mere image and expression."





## LOSSES.

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There are many millions of possible events, and many millions of persons on the earth. Yet of the possible events, perhaps there is not one that happens to only one person. We can not tell. But surely it is true that almost any one of the millions of events happens to many persons, and some of them to all persons. Now, in thinking what events there are which befall all persons, I have perceived two things: First, I see that they are very many, much larger in number than we might suppose at first, seeing that there are such countless millions of persons to divide among them the millions of events. Secondly, I see that these events which befall all persons include the greatest and most mighty events which befall any persons. That so many same events, and among these the greatest possible, befall us all, is one reason that we are all alike. That so many different events are sprinkled here and there and befall men in companies, communities, nations, or other natural assemblies, but are not common to all persons, is one reason that we are so unlike, yet with a common nature or resemblance pervading communities or assemblies.

Of the very great events, comprising the most mighty of all, which befall every one, four, I think, stand first, namely, 1. being born; 2. dying; 3. gaining some things; 4. losing some things. The two vast events of our coming hither and of our going away at last, stand up like mysterious barriers at the ends of life; between these we all gain some things, and some things lose. Thus loss is one of the events that surely befalls every one, and one of the most affecting and momentous too.

Losses are mingled with our lives like threads woven in and out. Three facts about them give them great interest in my mind, a peculiar part in our experience. One is that they are

the inseparable shadows of gains and pleasures; for we can gain some things only by loss of other things. Another fact is that we ourselves, if any one love us or benefit by us, must be a loss at some time, when we take our mysterious flight away. The other fact is that losses are often great sorrows, noble and divine sorrows; so that the theme of losses takes hold on deep things in us, and is a tender, dear and sacred subject.

It is wise to bethink us how sure it is that losses will befall. For either things fly away from us, or we from them. Time drops but briefly his jewels of hours and days; "it is soon cut off and we fly away." Riches "take to themselves wings," or, if they stay to the end, 'tis but because we take wings first ourselves. Friends fall like leaves. Intimacies cease, broken violently (an unhallowed bitterness), or fading gradually (a mournful frustration). Comrades forsake us, or go to other places, or die. Nay, if we keep our beloved, in body, 'tis to lose one form of them after another which the heart has cherished. The little babe in the arms is precious; but every day there is a small loss of him. Soon the daily detachments from our baby-jewel, like grindings from a diamond, have changed the shape. The infant is lost. We have the playful child, full of motion, of words, of questions, games, wiles, whimseys, ruses, craft, quickness, fascination; but the bosom-babe is gone. Still go on the polishings and cuttings of time, and soon the winsome child is gone—another loss. What is the gain? A youth, strong, liberated, flaming, glorious, proud, princely, daring, contentious! But the tricky child is lost. Soon the fiery youth follows him into that mist of dispossession; only a trained, sober man is by your side.

These are the losses inevitable. But others, that wring the heart hard, fall by the way as mystically as rain or meteors. The child, all light, the youth, all flame, the man, all sober glow, suddenly vanish. Cool Death loves them, and abducts them. His office is to lead away the old; but he is let loose often to seize the young too, the beautiful, the gay, the sweet, the gentle, liliated with childhood or rosemarried with youth. 'Tis his office, too, to cover up the spent or useless; but often he carries off jealously bodies full of service, minds full of counsel, hearts dispensing love as useful as dew, the wise father, the precious

and graceful mother. Ah! in these transfers comes loss indeed! Then comes heart-anguish! Then bitter struggles, mayhap a long time doubting and rebellious! Then holy sorrows, sacred bereavements, tears and prayers! Then long loneliness and out-reachings of the heart that come back like empty hands, without the precious child, without the sweet mother or the heart-dwelling friend!

So losses come, and must come. On whatever plane of life we live, they must come. If we live in ambition, which is "like hunger, obeying no law but its appetite," and "not always wise because 'tis brave,"—who gains all that he soars after? Nay, how many, after the soaring, drop with nothing? If we live in riches, how little they can buy, how easily are lost, what poor pleasures by the use of them, what hopeless chagrins by the flight of them! If we live not for ourselves in ambition or riches, but for others in love, then what noble sorrows replace the rank pangs of discontent, what tender and precious bereavements commute the torments of defeats and wrecks. As losses thus mingle in life, like a woof in the warp, this sermon is to express three thoughts about losses which, as I hope, will hold both strength and comfort in them.

But I shall speak wholly of the great losses of life, losses which are noble and heavenly sorrows. For of the lower losses, one thought is enough to give all possible strength and comfort in them, one principle holds the whole secret of them. Which one thought and principle is that we ought not to esteem much these lower things, and thereupon we shall rise easily above losses of them. To be concrete, and plain by example, I will put it thus—That the one principle of support under loss of riches, or power, or position, or whatsoever on that plane, is that we ought not to be devoted to these things; but we ought to be devoted to thoughts and to persons. Therefore it is in these realms alone, where thoughts and persons inhabit, that great and affecting losses ought to be possible to us. So that touching such losses alone we need to seek strength and comfort. For if we lose riches, our strength is that we ought not to be so devoted to them as to suffer much. But if we lose what it is a very joy and holiness and glory of life to be devoted unto, then, indeed, we need a strength and

comfort from large thoughts which, as it were, may dissolve, in one divinity, in one beauty and law, our devotion and the object of our devotion, so as to show us our love and our loss together in one divine keeping, mercy, love and law. Now as I have said, the objects to which we may be devoted with all our heart and soul, whereby loss in these things is a deep and holy sorrow, are thoughts and persons. But thoughts can not be lost. They are of that divine essence that they can not retire from us. Naught can abstract or abduct them from us, or take away their dwelling-place with us. Therefore I have no losses of which to speak now but losses of persons. Such losses may be by death. These are the easiest of them. No way is so little sorrowful as death by which to lose beloved persons. Or such losses may be by slow alienation, unworthiness of heart, unfaithfulness, treachery; or by moral disappointment, wrecks of character, unveiling of wickedness, overthrows, undoings, sinkings, foundering in dark seas. Whether a person turn from us treacherously—showing that he loved only with easy syllables or in summer weather, nay, loved not, but kept a careful ledger for himself—or whether (ah terrible!) we find we have loved a plague, poison, corruption, well hidden in fine linen,—these are the racking, rending, dreadful losses, these the tearings of persons from us which tear out the heart of us. Weighed with these, the death of dear persons makes but a light loss, yea, it rests in the scale-pan like a crown cut from night, set all around with brilliants of starry hopes.

But loss by death is sorrowful. 'Tis the nature of love that so it should be, and must be. How the heart clings! What a wrench the parting is! How exceeding precious is the daily presence of children, of sweet wife and mother, counseling father beloved friends! Nay, how dear the knowledge that they are on this earth, and though ten thousand miles away, how near they are! When that solemn, misty robe is brought to them and unseen hands wrap it around them and carry them away, and vanish with them like the day in the west, the heart is bowed down with a heavy weight of pure and solemn sorrow. It is of these losses only that now I will speak; for the worse losses, the bitter and and racking desertions and ruins of persons by which we loose them, require other thoughts, other "medicines

for the soul." Of the losses by death I will offer now the three thoughts which will have grace of strength and comfort in them, as I hope.

The first thought is this: Touching all losses, things go; but first they *come*! Fasten the mind on that. They could not go, but that first they come. We can not lose, but that already we have had. Beloved persons go from us; but first they have come to us. They come in every way just as they have gone, as solemnly, mysteriously, and in the same degree; so that never our loss is greater, nor can be, no, not by the weight of a breath, than the gain and joy that first we have had. We see them go in mystery. We can not follow. Our eyes are too blind with tears, even if the way were more open. But if our orbs were dry and clear, still we could not follow. But this mystery is no greater than the coming was. We can not follow the birth or the death behind the veils which hang over them. So that our loss of sweet children by the death of them is no more solemnized by holy mystery than our gain by the birth of them, and no less glorified. If a long time, many precious years, we keep them, or they keep their sweet mother, their dear father, that is but to say that much is possessed; and if then there be a flying away, and the loss be bitter and wring hard, 'tis only because we have had so much, so very much, such precious store. Surely we may turn our eyes from the loss to rate again the gain that was before the loss. Surely it is but grateful and truthful to bethink us that what has gone we first had, and that just by so much as the loss is a great sorrow, the having was a long and lovely joy. Surely this is wise and truthful and simple, good piety—a source of good strength and comfort for us. For it will make great difference to us whether we tent our souls in the dark and narrow pass of our present loss, or in the wide sun of the plain of our long and blissful having. Therefore turn the mind from our losing to our having had. 'Tis piety and help to do so. Saith a poet, "Some men, what losses soever they have, they make them greater; and if they have none, even all that is not gotten is a loss." I will show the difference between looking on one side and on another by a good allegory which I have heard. Two pitchers were carried to a fountain to be filled. One said, "I am weary of this life of mine; how-



ever often I go away from the fountain filled, I always come back empty." "Why, how you look at it," said the other; "for my part I was thinking that however often I come empty to the fountain, I always go away filled." Saith another poet, "He is poor that has not lost." And truly so; for to loose nothing is fair proof of little to lose; small losses mean small gains. But says the poet, also, "He is poorer that hath lost and forgotten." Truly so again, and wisely said, with a knowledge of the human heart. For if one *forget* what he has lost, 'tis because he was so little rich in the enjoyment of it that it is as if he had it not, and though having it he was poor with it. But the poet continues, "He is poorest who has lost, and wishes he might forget." Again wise and true; for if one have been very rich in the enjoyment of a beloved person, he will not wish to pluck that person from his mind because he hath fled from his side; no, but he will dwell on him with piety and a kind of glory. Therefore I say it is a good thought, with strength and comfort in it, that if things go, first they come, and that if we lose beloved persons, first they came to us, and stayed with us a long, blissful time, by as much as the parting is sorrowful; and that we should fasten the mind on this thought. Once a maiden asked me to marry her to her lover who was very ill. I questioned her long and deeply, and warned her. "Have you considered," said I, "that probably soon you will be left a widow? and all which that means?" "Yes," she answered; "but if the worst come at last, or come soon, or now, still it is such solemn joy to have had, and to remember!"

The second thought is that as all things go, but first they come, so they come perfectly, completely; they are *all* ours. But they go away only partially, and only in a small measure cease to be ours. Fasten the mind on that.

Purposely do I say "things" and not persons. For it is true even of things that they come to us perfectly and can be withdrawn only in part. If we have riches, they are ours, wholly. What may we not do that riches can do? We may build, plant, gather beautiful things, make centers of power and instruction, rear institutions, spread waves of happiness, refreshment, knowledge, rest, health. Do the riches fly away thereafter? Perhaps. But the things we have done with them



can not fly. The good fruits in our own mind, the buildings on earth or in heaven, the joys provided for others, the thrills or blessings we have set up in a heart—these wither not, these stay. The riches come perfectly to us, with all their power; but they can go away only imperfectly, leaving much power with us in immortal forms. But much more so is it with beloved persons. How completely they come to us! How perfectly they are ours—*all* ours! They touch us on all sides. They belong to us in every power of our being and work in us in every manner. To our hearts they come with perfection, to our love with wholeness. Without hindrance we wrap them in our love and cover them with it. They call forth our tenderest feelings. They break up the very fountains of the heart that it may stream over them. And they give us of their love in like measure. They unite with us in mind, they join in thoughts with us, they share the splendors of intelligence, glory with us in ideals, are thrilled with the beauties which illuminate us; they tremble with the harmonies which shake us. They are ours in soul; they know with us what religion is; they love the truth with us, sing praises with us, inspire, hope, worship, pray. In all, they come to us *perfectly*. There is no limit to our drawing unto each other in earnest life. Power to power, love to love, thought to thought, they may watch with us and walk with us. With such perfection they come to us, in such heavenly manner they are ours!

But how go they away? Only a little. When the loss of them comes, how lose we what perfectly we have had? Only in part; yea, in very little part. Of all the things which they brought with them, of all in which they were ours so perfectly, in such spherical glory, as the heavens are round about the earth on all sides, of all this union and blessedness, the loss of them by death can take away but one part, which is the perceivableness of them by our senses. We can not see or touch or hear them any more. Some strange law, which yet we know not, cuts off so much as that. But that is all. Every other dear delight which they had with us, and were unto us, is fixed in us and immortal. They came *perfectly*, and perfectly they *stay* with us, except only with our senses. All the precious possession of them in thought and love, all the trust in their faithful

affection, the associations which they created in our minds, the memories, the intelligence, the pure joys of high devotions unto each other and together unto good things—these remain untouched. Not one throb or song or prayer of them all can the loss by death tear away. Memory hath charge of them. How rich a thought is this for us—That unto every power and possibility in our souls our beloved persons come; but they can be taken away by death from no more than our senses! Surely what joy! What strength! What comfort! Fasten the mind on that.

The third thought is that as things go away, but first they come, and as they come perfectly, completely, but go away only in part, so some things are dearer to us than others. But what things? Those that most belong to the mind, heart, soul—such as beloved persons. These being the dearest, therefore to part with them is the most painful of partings. But it is just they that leave most of their associations and of themselves with us when they go away, and part with us the least. Therefore, it is ordered very mercifully in the Providence and Law of losses, that we lose least those dearest blessings which cause most pain in the loss of them. Those most precious treasures, which by leaving us pierce us with the sharpest sorrow, are those which leave us the least. Fasten the mind on that.

So careful are all things to depart from us in less degree than they come to us, so is it written in the divine nature of things that all things come to us completely after their kind, but go away from us only partially, endowing us with themselves in full measure, but being lost by us only in some measure—so rich and wide is this law that even the lower orders of treasures obey it, as I have said. Riches come completely, and all the power and grace of them is in our hands while they stay; and if they take wings, still they leave with us always the sweetness of what grace and joy we have builded with them. But riches fly away more completely than persons, who are dearer than riches; if they go they leave less with us. For we but use riches; they can not use us. We but plan and do and execute with them. Wealth is a lowly instrument. We can not commune with it; 'tis a servant, not a friend; a thing, not a soul. We stand with it in our hands, but lay it not to our hearts. It talks

not, loves not, sings not, nor studies, walks, counsels, prays with us. But when a beloved person is taken from us, all these things remain with us. He has conversed with us, he has mixed his very life with our very life, he has loved us and advised us, we have toiled together, and together hoped, feared, rejoiced, triumphed; he has become reason in our reason, his image is in the soul's eye, he has wept and laughed with us, grieved and danced, bowed down with us and been lifted up—our prayers have been one. When he is taken away, in how little part is he taken, being removed only from the senses, while all these joys and parts of him stay with us immortally. By as much as he is more precious than gold, by so much the less he can be taken from us. He is dearest of all things to us, and least of them all he can leave us. "Death, where is thy sting? Grave, where is thy victory?" No sting, no victory! Only a precious, holy, heavenly sorrow, only a hunger of heart for the dear body or presence of the beloved person, because, in truth, he feeds the soul so much by all of him that remains that the heart hath the strength and health to be hungry.

I leave these three thoughts with you touching losses:

1. That 'tis true we lose precious things, but first we have them; they go, but first they come. Fasten the mind on that.

2. That our treasures come to us perfectly, and are *all* our's; but they go away only in part, and leave great measures of themselves with us. Hence, we have total gifts, but we can not have total losses. Fasten the mind on that.

3. That the dearer our treasures are, which is to say, beloved persons, and those nearest to heart and soul, the less can they be taken away from us, and the more of themselves they leave with us. Therefore, our most precious gains and treasures, though the sorrow for the loss of them be great and divine, yet in the loss of them are less loss by the very measure of their preciousness and nearness, because they go away in the least part and leave most of themselves with us. Fasten the mind on that.

When we look at the laws of having and losing, and the mysteries in us, we feel borne in a vast and deep sea, even the life of God in us. I have heard of voyagers on the ocean, who, on that mighty heaving breast and rolling majesty, where the winds

have free course, the waters rise, the vast waves yawn, and they that go down in ships are swayed as tree-tops in the blasts—have felt all peaceful and quiet, awed, quelled, but calm and even lulled, lying down to slumber as “rocked in the cradle of the deep.” So may we be, on the breast of these thoughts of our losses, which is the law and nature of God. So may we live, awed and quelled, but calm, blest, till we too become a loss in our turn—yet not so much a loss as first and forever a gain to our beloved—and borne on these depths of faith and of knowledge, we lie down, and after us they, and are not afraid, “rocked in the cradle of the deep.”

## RELIGION AND THE BIBLE.

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Good and great thoughts or noble deeds are put into writings. At once, or very soon, in this age of the world. After a long time, in the ancient ages. For in the old times, thousands of years ago, great thoughts and deeds of men, made into songs and poems, were held in the memory and passed from mouth to mouth for many hundreds of years. But whether very soon, as in our times, or after many years, as in the olden times, at last great and noble ideas are put into writings; and these writings make books.

Therefore, we find all nations looking with great awe on books. Now always there is one book which a people holds to be greater than all others. They look on it with religious feelings. Sometimes they have so much awe of it that almost they fear to touch it, and all their religion gathers about it. They never feel in this way about any new book, but always an old book. When it becomes so old that no one can remember anything of its beginning and no one knows when it was written or who wrote it, then they reverence it more than anything they have; and the older it grows, the more awe they have of it. This is the way in which people have felt about the Bible for many hundreds of years, even for much more than 1500 years. Many of the sayings and stories in it, and even some of the books, date back more than a thousand years before these 1500 years. Their beginning is lost in this far-off time. We can not tell just how the Bible sprang up, who wrote its great pages, how long they floated in the people's memories before they were written down, or when, at last, they were put into writing. It stands there, as if never it was made by man. It looms like some great being out of a cloud, only dimly seen

at first, and showing only his great size, but coming out at last with all his beautiful shape and mighty strength. We know more about the books of the New Testament; but even about many of them we know very little, they are so old, so wonderful, and tell such grand, strange things. So that for many hundreds of years since the Bible was finished and the New Testament was written, and all had grown old, this book has been the one which we have looked on with great awe. People have taught their little children to lisp its sayings and to believe them the words of God. Men have gone to it for help and comfort in all troubles and struggles. They have looked into it to learn what to think of God, of life, death, duty. They have thought even that the Bible was the only source of knowledge of these things, and that there would be no religion, no knowledge of God, no help in life, no hope in death, if the Bible were taken away. For hundreds of years people have believed everything in it and thought every word of it was true. Even when it said things that contradicted each other, people have believed them both just the same, without seeing that both could not be true. It has been a sacred book, revered, worshiped, read with awe and with fear, also with hope and with love. People have rested on it their whole religion. It has been believed that God himself was the author of the book; that he guided the minds and the pens of the men who wrote it and told them what to say; that it is all divine, perfect, wholly true; and that we must obey it and trust to it altogether. Sometimes it has been thought there were some errors in it, some places, or even books, in which men wrote of themselves without divine guidance; but only very few such places, and all the rest of it the true and perfect word of God.

But now a great change has come over our way of looking at the Bible. Men look not on it with the awe which once they felt. They reverence its grand, glorious thoughts and the great deeds told in it just the same; but they are learning that there are very many mistakes in it, very many things also which are not noble and true but belong to the unfinished and wild times in which the writings sprang up. Men are ceasing to think that cruel acts and hard feelings, stealing, slave-holding, and other bad things, are good and right because the Scriptures say



God commanded them or permitted them; or that ever such things were good, or that God ever did, or ever could, command them. When Joshua, as the Bible says, took many cities of Canaan and left not a single human being alive in them, either men, women or children, but slew them all, and sometimes in very cruel ways, men used to say that it was right because God commanded it, and that we knew God commanded it because the Bible says so; but now we say that it was wrong, and therefore God could not command it, and that the assertion of the Scriptures that he did command it is no proof at all. We say that in these places we have not the divine nature and commands, but the nature, cruelties and wars of a wild time and of a half-savage people. We have learned also that there are many places in the Bible which deny each other; that the same thing is told in two or three different ways very often, so that they cannot all be true.\* We have found out also that the

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\*Many contradictions in the Bible can be perceived and understood only after a study of the books sufficient to give one a *sense* of the fact of the different authorship of different books, and even of different parts or the same book. Also it is to be said that the inconsistencies are of inferior consequence in the main. But this last remark is true only as regards the high and valuable substance of the Bible, both as history and as religion. If the Bible be viewed as a divine revelation above human accidents or production, then the contradictions are very important, because, on this view, there ought to be none at all. With this preface, compare Gen. xv, 13 with 16 and Exod. xii, 40, wherein the servitude of the Israelites in Egypt is stated at 400 years and again at only four generations: Compare Exod. xii, 37 and 38, wherein, with 600,000 fighting men, beside women and children, and a mixed multitude, it is plain that the people must have numbered not less than 2,000,000, with Deut. vii, 7 and Exod. xxiii, 27-30, wherein the people are called "few" and so weak in numbers that the inhabitants of little Canaan must be driven out gradually by the Lord, lest the wild animals should increase and possess the land against the Israelites: compare Deut. i, 35-38, iii, 23-28, with Numbers xx, 7-12, xxvii, 12-14, in which passages it is stated that Moses was forbidden to enter Canaan because he must share the condemnation of the whole people, and yet contrariwise,—because *he himself* had sinned at the rock, either by incredulity or by a self-glorifying manner: Compare Joshua xii, 7-24 and xiv, 6-10, from which it appears that Joshua overran the whole land and defeated thirty-one kings in five years; with Joshua xv, 13-16, Judges I. i, 10-13, wherein it appears that others subdued Hebron and its dependencies after the death of Joshua; with Joshua xvi, 10, Judges i, 29, which state that Gezer was *not* conquered, notwithstanding Joshua x, 33: Compare 1 Sam. xvii, about David and Goliath, with 2 Sam. xxi, 19, where it is said that it was one Elhanan who slew Goliath; but in this reference the reader must consult the Revised Version, for the Common Version adds words not in the Hebrew, in order to make the passage agree with 1 Sam. xvii on the one hand, and with 1 Chron. xx, 5, on the other hand; see "Bible for Learners," Roberts Bros., Boston, Vol. I, p. 506; and if this note meet the eye of any one who not yet has read the above translation of the admirable work of the Dutch Scholars, let me say that it will give him of the great Book a knowledge so fresh, so vivid, living and reasonable, that he will find it as stirring as a romance and as instructive as documentary history: Compare Mt. i, ii, Luke i, ii, 1-39, the miraculous birth, the magi, the angels, etc., with the evident

books and parts of books (for even the same books seem often written by different hands) are of many different dates;\* that each one shows the state of the people's minds at that date to which the book belongs; that the books treat the same fact or idea very differently because they were viewed diversely by the people at different dates in their history; and that we can trace in these books not one settled religious state, but slow growth from a low and barbarous condition to the milder traits and higher thoughts which we find clustering about Jesus.

Besides all this, we meet another very striking fact; it is this: Whenever we read the history of any people (no matter what one; they are all alike in this), we find far back in the beginning a crowd of stories like the magic tales of the Arabians or like the fairy tales which children enjoy. Always these are religious and patriotic stories; that is, they show the people's awe of powers and beings whom they looked up to and worshiped, and their pride about themselves and their native land. These stories tell how the gods of the nation did all sorts of magical things to show their favor, or to punish the people's sins; and how the great heroes of the tribe were befriended by their gods, and wonderful works done for them; and how the nation's gods proved themselves stronger than the gods of all other nations and gave victories in war by their magical help. The people believed these stories and delighted in them, just as children, who are simple, ignorant, full of imagination, like primitive nations, enjoy their fairy books. The older the stories become, the more the people reverence them. At last the stories get written down and gathered in a book,

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total unconsciousness of his family that any wonders or glories surrounded Jesus, Luke ii, 48-50, Mt. xiii, 53-58, and his friends' conclusion that he must be insane, Mt. iii, 19-21: Compare Luke ii, 8-20, which certainly would have been noised abroad widely, and especially at Jerusalem, distant from Bethlehem only a three hours' journey, and the presentation in the Temple at Jerusalem, and the ecstatic declarations of Simeon and Anna, Luke ii, 22-38, with Mt. ii, 1-12, where it appears that the events told in Luke were totally unknown in Jerusalem: Compare Mt. ii, 13-21, the flight and sojourn in Egypt, with Luke ii, 39, where it is said that they returned at once to Nazareth.

\* For example, bits of Genesis, Exodus, Judges, Samuel, about 1,000 years B. C.; bits of Exodus, Deuteronomy, Numbers, Proverbs, and several Prophets, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, from 700 to 800 years B. C.; Malachi, Job, many Psalms and Proverbs, Ruth, Jonah, parts of Leviticus and Numbers, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, early forms of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, about 400 to 500 B. C.; later form of Pentateuch and Joshua, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, about 250 B. C. See Chronology at end of Vol. III, "Bible for Learners."

and then the people reverence the book, thinking it records the dealing of the divine power with their nation; and they go to it for their religion. Now, just such stories as these, which we find in the history of all peoples, we find in the history of the Jews also, and in the Bible which contains that history. Indeed, it is quite full of them. We read almost on every page that Yahweh (which was their name for God) was fighting in the battles of the Jews, that he routed their foes for them, confused the minds of their enemies, threw down the walls of cities, opened a way through seas and rivers, made the sun stand still that the Israelites might have a longer time to fight, and did a host of such-like wonders for his chosen people. Now, these things have shown us that the Bible, which is the history of the early and wild times of the Israelites and of their slow growth to a better state, has the same traits as the histories of other nations in their early stages and slow growth; which must be so, because mankind are the same everywhere and grow in the same way and show the same qualities in the same stages of their growth, just as children show like traits at like times from infancy to maturity. Therefore, we have to treat all these early histories alike. If we believe not the magical wonders told in other early records, then we cannot believe those of the Bible, because plainly they are all of the same kind, spring up in the same way and in the same stages of a people's growth, and show a great likeness to each other wherever they are found.

But, besides all this, we have to remember that in the far-off times when the Bible and such-like early histories grew up, men knew very little about nature. They could give no account of a thunder storm, or of the rain, or hail, or wind, nor could they tell why rivers should rise at one time and fall at another. They thought the earth was flat and was the center of all things. They could not explain day and night, and had no notion of the spaces between the stars. For the stars they thought to be like lamps fixed in a curved crystal wall and made to turn around the earth. Therefore, all early records, and the Bible among them, have many errors springing from ignorance of the facts of nature, like the story of the creation in the Bible, according to which this great earth and the still vaster stars were

all made in six days; or like the story of the deluge, wherein it is told that the whole earth was flooded mountain-high by means of rain. As the people knew not the true facts, many different explanations would be likely to arise—which, indeed, did happen. There are even two different accounts of the creation, as you may see by reading carefully the first book of the Bible.\*

Thus, as I have said, because we have found things in the Bible which our science now shows to be errors; because we find many places in it which agree not together but tell the same thing in very different ways; because mingled with grand and beautiful thoughts there are many things which are bad and ugly, having sprung from the wildness and fierceness of ancient and primitive times; because the different portions of the Bible bear different dates, and are not all the same in spirit and thought, but vary with the times they spring from; and because the pages are full of those same magical and strange stories which we find in all other early histories,—a change has come over our way of looking at the Bible. We call it not now as much as we did, and very many persons not at all, the word of God given to us to teach us the religion we ought to have; but a history, made by man, first passed by mouth from one to another for a long time, afterward written down, telling the thoughts, religious feelings, superstitions and deeds of the Jewish people during their slow growth from half-savage tribes loosely gathered and wandering together in a desert, to a united nation, to a higher religion and to a milder social condition.

Now, this change in the view of the Bible seems to some persons to be giving up everything, even religion itself. They resist it as long as they can. They cling to the old way in which they were taught, of believing everything in the Scripture simply because it is there. They wish to continue think-

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\*The first narrative of creation is in Genesis i, 1, to ii, 3. This is a lofty, grand, noble poem, sublime in its conceptions. The second narrative is in Genesis ii, 4-25. This is inferior, even puerile. The two agree as little in details as they do in spirit and elevation. For example, in the first narrative, all the lower creatures are created first, and then man is created, male and female at once; but in the second narrative, a man is created first, then the lower creatures, which are brought to the man to be named, and after this a woman is made of a rib taken from the man while he is asleep. To move from the i to the ii chapter of Genesis is to step suddenly into a totally different and lower world of imagination, sentiment and thought.



ing the Bible the proof of the providence and being of God and of all the truths of religion. Indeed they have thought it so for so long a time that they cannot think there is any other ground of religion. Slowly such persons are forced to yield to the facts. If they be wilfully ignorant, shutting eyes and ears, they may keep on thinking as their grandfathers did before the facts came to light. But such belief will not merit the name of faith or of conviction; for it will be either without knowledge or afraid of knowledge. But if they be intelligent and willing to learn, then, I say, slowly their minds will yield to the plain facts. They will see that the Bible is not a perfect guide; above all, that it is not the word of God sent to teach a lost and degraded world religious things which it never would learn otherwise; but that simply it is the literature and history of a race which had a wonderful career and was endowed with a deep religious fervor. Now, when such persons learn these facts and are forced to see them, after resisting them as long as they can, often they are smitten with despair. They feel alone in the world. The sense of a kind of heavenly company and oversight of earthly things, great instances of which the Bible has assured them of, has gone. Their ground of trust or belief has been broken, perhaps rudely. They say, "Well, the Bible has been taken away, and I see nothing left. All is uncertainty and dispute, and I find nothing to rest in, and no ground for religion."

Now, is not this what we must expect if we build a house on a bad foundation? A bad foundation is one that is not strong enough to hold the weight of the house, and gives way. But when the foundation crumbles and the house falls, it is not the fault of the house. The house may be good and fit to live in. The fault is in the unsafe and weak base we have placed it on. Suppose a temple to be built on a hill of sand, and the hill to stand as long as all is quiet. The beautiful towers and spires rise into the sky and make men's hearts glad, pointing to hope, trust, and power. Many generations meet together in the temple, and the older it grows, the dearer and more sacred it becomes. Its very walls seem holy thoughts. Its organ peal is the sound of the prayers of five hundred years. And meantime all has been peace. But one day, when the

grand and beautiful building is trembling as usual with the organ, the people kneeling, comes a great wind sweeping down from the same sky that so long has given its light to the temple. The sand is whirled into the air. The hill is torn to pieces. The temple falls on the people, while the sun is blotted out awhile by the flying clouds of sand and of fragments of the ruin. Is it the fault of the temple? or of the worship of the people who were praying therein? Does the fall prove these things bad or false? No; only that they were set on a weak place unable to hold their weight when a strain came. This is indeed the same figure chosen by Jesus to teach the Jews the same lesson. He had been telling them they were building their religion on books and forms and priests, whereas they ought to build it on their own souls; and then he added, "With this bad foundation, your religion will stand for a time while the sky is quiet; but what will you do when storms come? Then your religion will be like a house built on sand, and will fall. But the religion built on your own souls, which I am telling you of, will be like a house built on a rock and will stand." So, if you build religion on the Bible as a message of God to mankind, made by Him all true and perfect for that purpose, by and by the winds arise and the floods come; I mean knowledge, science and history. They come breaking in. They sweep away all false claims and make you see the Bible as it is, simply a human history of the growth of a race and of its religion, and bearing all the marks of other ancient records. Then it may be very true, indeed, that the religion which you have built on the Bible as a miracle of God, will fall to ruin when that foundation, which I may liken to a hill of sand, is torn away by the blasts of knowledge; but it is not the fault of religion, but of the weak and unsafe ground which you have made it rest on in your minds. And as, if a house fall to ruin (and think of this, I pray you) because it is ill-placed, on crumbling soil, not architecture or house-building, or the fitness of dwelling in a house, is overthrown, but only that one house, because it was ill-placed, so, if your religion fall to pieces when you are made to see the Bible as it is, not religion is overturned, but only *your* religion, which you have built upon a heap of sand.



What, then, shall we do if our house have fallen on us because the bad foundation we built it on has crumbled. Will it be wise to sit on the bare ground, unsheltered, despairing, either sullen or whimpering, saying that houses are delusions, that no one can build a house able to stand, that nothing is left but to stretch ourselves on the cold sod and take whatever the bleak skies shower on us? In order to know that this is foolish, need you anything more than to look about you? For you will see houses on all sides in which people live safely and happily, which not even have been shaken by the wind that overthrew your dwelling; not because the inmates knew not of the gale, or because it passed them by, for they heard its roaring clearly, but because they had fixed their houses on a solid place. You will find many persons who have a religion in them which out-rides all the tempests of life, not only the blasts of knowledge and science, but the more furious storms of feeling, passion, pain. Very great persons of the earth you will see these to be, nobly intelligent, searching in mind, candid and truth-loving in spirit, sublime in act; and they think not religion is overthrown or has failed. They live under its roof, which is as steady as the sky for shelter, as glorious for sublimity, as starry for joy. They will tell you—these simple yet great folk, whom you may find about you plentifully, and also in ages past bearing great names, persons like Jesus, Socrates, Huss, Paul, Fenelon, Parker, and many more such-like—they will tell you that religion is not shaken by anything when it is founded on the human soul; that if it be built on a book, a church, on traditions in any shape, it can have no more steadiness than these things on which it stands have, which are changeable things, shifting and even falling to pieces in the lapse of time or by the growth of knowledge; but that if religion rests wholly in the nature of man, it *must* have all the lastingness and power which the natural unfolding of human nature has, and nothing *can* have any more. It is true that men's thoughts of religion change from age to age. This must be so. For, however religion be sought and fixed in the soul, the mind cannot see all the truth about it at once, nay, it must go on learning forever how to think justly of religion and to travel its infinite regions. But this overturns nothing, because religion is not the same as this or that thought

of religion, but something that lives in the act of thinking and in the adoration of the truth as a living power. These changes of thoughts may alter religion, but not destroy the foundation of it; and if they be growth in knowledge, they may make the base stronger, as if a foundation of hard wood were changed into stone, and that again into pure gold, while the house stands.

If, therefore, we see so many of the wise and good of our own times and of all ages, having a religion which is not shaken by anything, will it not be wise to think long before we say there is no religion and naught for a basis of religion, only because our own foundation has proved frail and crumbling? If one foundation has failed, as if it were a sand-heap on the surface, shall we not be wise to dig deeply after another one, thus to find the firm rock? For, if so many wise and great persons cherish religion, and it seem in them not only good, fruitful, but lasting, immovable, surely it were foolish for us to toss it away like a bauble full of flaws. At any rate, let us think long, well, reverently.

Now, if we think, we shall ask this question: Having "given up the Bible" in this manner, (our opponent's charge, but unjust), what have we left? But this is a hard question to answer in a little space, not because so little is left, but so much. If it must be answered in a word, the answer is, EVERYTHING.

Imagine a man placed in very happy conditions in life. He has riches, and whatever riches can buy. He has beside, plentifully, the things riches cannot buy. His home is cheerful. His house is in a pleasing, healthful, beautiful place, having many trees about it, garden walks, flower-beds, fruit-vines and shrubs, generous orchards, a spring of sweet water, and a fine view of distant blue hills and ruddy valleys. His home rings with children and is filled with love. In a fine crystal case in the best room he has a huge spike like gold, by which he sets much store. All the family admire and praise it. Often they gather about that golden bar to wonder at its lustre, weight, value and beauty. But one day comes a stranger to the house; being shown the treasure of the family, he says, "The spike is not gold; it only looks like gold," and drawing a little vial of acid from his pouch, he touches the gleaming bar, and lo! a deadly gas arises and a stain remains which proves it to be false

metal; for nothing so could affect pure gold. Then if the man and his family should weep and wail in despair and ask, "What have we left?" it would be hard to answer such a question because of the many great things that would be left. If they should ask, "What have we lost?" it were easy to answer, for it were but one thing, and that the least of their possessions. But if the question be, What have we remaining? it will take a long time to count the things left and much longer still to show and describe their values and how far they are above the false spike which has been taken away by the stranger's knowledge. In truth, we must say to the owner, "You have EVERYTHING left! All that ever truly you had, is still yours. For only you *seemed* to have a spike of gold when in truth it was not gold." So, if any ask, Having given up the Bible, as the phrase goes, what is left? either we must count all the great, good and deep things of life, which have such vast meanings, or we must say in a word, EVERYTHING! and we must add, "We have all that ever we had; for we only *seemed* to have a miraculous book set up in our house to be held in awe because miraculous, but in truth it was a simple human history; a book like all others of its kind, but we knew not its true nature."

But I say, although a stranger with his knowledge has shown us the truth about our book, taken away our mistake about it, made it come down from its crystal seat, we have EVERYTHING left; for, never truly we had any more than now, but only *seemed* to have more by ascribing a false worth to something. I will gather into two points the things which we have left—EVERYTHING!

First, we have the Bible left. This may seem strange and bold. But ask yourselves what you really mean by giving up the Bible. You will see then that this is a wrong thing to say. For in truth you mean only that certain things in the Bible have been taken away; that the idea that the book is a miraculous revelation from God has been corrected in your minds; that some stories, precepts and thoughts have been shown not to be true, nor divine, but to be only the pride, patriotism, religion, superstition, of the Hebrew people; that these are things not belonging to the heart of human nature and to the heavenly truth, but to the feelings, prejudices, customs and ideas of a

far-off time in the growth of one race, and that these have been taken from a false light in which we had put them and from a place they deserved not, and set in their true light and place. But all the grand things in the Bible, that eternally are true and as wide as humanity, remain to us, nor are taken away, nor could be. The figure of Moses is a colossal one. The story of Joseph is as tender as ever it was. The poems of Genesis are as pleasant to the imagination. We have still, and forever, the mighty warnings or joyful comfortings of Isaiah and the other prophets, the grand poem of Job, the deep religious love and worship of the Psalms. Jesus walks still in Galilee, glorious, beautiful, heavenly, heroic, and all the grandeur and loveliness of His spirit, which so calls out the soul, remains untouched. Stephen still defies his judges with the truth and looks up to heaven, dying. Paul is the same strong, wide-minded, free, devoted, fearless spirit who preached that God had made all nations of one blood, and that forms are bad and barbarous if they keep men apart from each other. These remain. These are the grand and life-giving things in the Bible. They cannot be moved.

Finally, we have ourselves and the Universe left, our own souls and God. This is the one source of religion, full, inexhaustible. All other things are helps. The soul's sight of divinity encompassing it, is the one perfect and immovable ground of religious life. For comfort, for help, for hope, faith, trust, for depth of moral convictions, for understanding of life, we need only the soul and God. The beholding of other souls is great and life-giving; we drink in their beauty, loftiness, sacrifices, glory. But we return into our own soul, as the holy place wherein we can hear God speak for ourselves. This we can hear, for it is our nature to know and perceive the infinite beauty and holiness in which "we live and move and have being." God never was in any time more than in this time; nor nearer to any soul than he is to our own souls; nor more speaking and telling his commands and his being in any hearts than now in our own. This is the only authority. This is the one source of religious knowledge. This is the rock on which worship builds its shrines of everlastingness. This is the source to which went the great prophets and singers of the Bi-

ble. We hear of it in the Psalms. Isaiah, Jesus, Paul, say it is the source of life and knowledge. What was the source and ground of religion for Jesus is the same for us, and the one that rests on a rock. We need no more. Therefore, we find we have no more, nor can have. Religion is not a sum of things put into us by a time past, or by a record of God's doing and speaking in other places; but a life that rises within us and comes out of us skyward, like flame, seeking its source. It is natural, sure, steadfast, being in the relation of the soul to God, of our life, love and thought to their Infinite and Eternal Source. Religion needs no more. For naught can be so close to us and so deep in us as our Infinite Source, the Being of our being. This is our nature; this is also life and religion, from which the Bible itself rolled forth.

'The word unto the prophet spoken  
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;  
Still floats upon the morning wind,  
Still whispers to the willing mind;  
One accent of the Holy Ghost,  
The heedless world has never lost.'

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To this point now we have come:

1. That the Bible is a human history and literature, containing the story of the Hebrew race and the course of the growth of the Hebrew religion.

2. That this Hebrew literature is marked by the traits of all ancient histories and literature.

3. That very prominent among these traits is ignorance of Nature's laws, and marvelous magical stories springing from this ignorance.

4. That thus many old views of the Bible have passed away; but that all the pure religious beauty, the lofty psalms, the moral grandeurs of that great Book remain undisturbed, and are everlasting.



Here we may turn to look at the Bible and religion in another manner, and may do so by means of this question, "Which of them depends on the other?" For it is not to be doubted that the Bible is a book of religion. It holds a wonderful religious literature, always severe and earnest, often lofty and glorious. Since then, it is a religious book, not a scientific, philosophical or merely literary work, not a history merely, but both a religious history and a book of devotion and of prayer, plainly either religion must have come forth from the Bible, or the Bible from religion. This is a great difference and lies at the root of the matter. It is a question of the very nature of religion—whether it be natural, and grow up out of the human soul, or whether it be supernatural and be put into the soul. One view, the old view of the Bible about which I am speaking, is that great religious truths shine not in us by the light of nature but must be put into us by divine power; that the Bible is the Word given for that purpose; that by it alone we learn truly His providence and nature, faith in this life and hope of the hereafter; and that but for this light of revelation in the Bible we should be in darkness as to all the ways of God with men and the things which he has in store for us. The other view is that religion is natural and necessary to man's nature, and rises in us as love, thought, memory, self-consciousness do; that it grows up from within by the action on us of the glories and terrors of the earth and sky, of the infinity of space, of the unendingness of time, and of the power of the moral law; that it begins in low states and grows purer and higher with time; that it clothes itself in many forms, in institutions, rites, books, and that it is able to make such impress of itself as the Bible is; that thus the Bible has sprung from human sentiment of religion, and bears witness to the power and sublimity of this fact of human nature, and rests on it.

Between these two views there is no middle ground. Granting that the Biblical books are Scriptures of religion, then either religion came forth from the Bible or the Bible sprang from religion.

Now, if the former be true, if religion came from the Bible and begin for us in its pages, then of course any disturbance of that book disturbs religion. For then to move the Bible, even



a little, is to shake the whole fabric of religion, which springs from it. If religion begin in the Scripture, if without that book we should have no religion beyond a few feeble and doubtful gropings of the unaided mind, then it is very true that whatever aims to set aside the miraculous parts of the Scriptures and to place the Bible on the plane of human life and of nature's order, threatens religion itself, if not its very existence, yet its influence and authority. But if religion begin not in the Bible, nor spring from it, but on the contrary, if the Bible have come from religion and be one of the many forms in which human worship and religious feeling has clothed itself, then it is plain that religion is not moved at all by any change in our view of the Bible or by any new knowledge of it that can be gotten; for religion being the source, and the Bible but one of the streams that has flowed from it, the source is not affected by anything that betides the river below. We may make any discoveries or gather any knowledge whatsoever about the Scripture; religion stands unmoved the same; for the Bible is not the origin of religion but religion is the origin of the Bible.

If we study the stream that flows from a mountain spring or from a lake far up the heights fed by the perpetual snows of the peak, we may learn something about the highland source of the river. We may analyse the river water, and after finding in that way what it holds dissolved in it, how much lime, or salt, or magnesia, or iron, or carbon, and other things, we may say, "These, then, are also in the source of the river; the water of the mountain basin holds these things also." But soon, perhaps, by exploring more, we find another stream emptying into the river above the place where we tested the water; and this stream comes not from the mountain source, but from some rills and brooks that traverse a stretch of woodland only a little elevated. Soon we learn that some of the things in the river-water below, come from this stream and are not in the river above the mouth of the little tributary. Thus we may correct our view of what the waters of the high upland source contain, by learning what is added by the little streams that flow in along the river's course. But whatever we may learn or infer about the kind of water in the snow-fed lake of the hills, that basin is not moved

away by any changes in our knowledge of the river and of its tributaries below. However long and much our knowledge of its waters may vary, the great river that flows from it shows it to be there. So it is with the Bible and religion, when we see clearly that religion is the source and the Scriptures the river. By study of the Bible, the river, we may learn much of the nature of religion, the source. By care and pains to find out what has gotten into the Bible from other streams of historic influence, from the traits of a race or of several races, from prejudices, passions, patriotism, ancient ignorance, from the fervent imagination of people in their childhood, from the mode of keeping and of handing down books in old times, we may draw nearer and nearer to knowing the true essence of religion, the source of the main stream. But whatever we may learn about the Bible, and thence infer about the place, nature and growth of religion in human history, we are not overthrowing the fact of religion itself, since religion is the very origin of the Bible which we study, and, indeed, of many other great Scriptures beside. Therefore, I say, that if religion come out of the Bible, and rest on it, then it will be at the mercy of whatever affects the place and power of that book; but if the Bible have sprung from religion and rest on it, then religion is the chief and first, and stays unmoved whatever may happen to the book.

Let us see, then, what are some of the reasons why it is true that religion rests not on the Bible, but the Bible on religion.

First, religion is older than the Bible, very much older. Before even the Hebrews began to write down their history, even long before they had collected much which they passed from mouth to mouth for many generations before writing it, they had a religion, which also their fathers had, going away back to their seats in the hills of Armenia. And long before we begin to walk on historic ground in the Hebrew history, with Moses and the Egyptian captivity, religion had lived some thousands of years in Egypt. We cannot get back to its beginning. The traces of the religion of the forefathers of the Hebrews, their fearful and austere deities, germane to a race living in a country of hills and hard soil, are plentiful in the

Bible. But the trace of the first human worship is lost in an antiquity compared to which Moses is a modern hero. How, then, can religion rest on the Bible if religion was before the Bible? How can religion flow from the Scripture if religion came first? Plainly, the Bible, which came after, owes its religious part to the religion which went before, which was the half-blind, but also the half-seeing and altogether sublime, struggle upward of the human soul.

Secondly. There have been many nations and races on the earth that never knew of the Bible, both before there was any Bible and since. Yet these had their religion, and even large, often grand, Scriptures of their own. The Egyptians, the Chinese, the Hindoos, the Persians, the Greeks and Romans, the Norse tribes,—all had their religion, their hymns or Scriptures, their worship and rites, some of them very noble and grand. Yet none knew of the Bible. How, then, can religion depend on the Bible and spring from it, when there are many religions, and grand religious Scriptures and devout hymns, among people who never knew of the Bible, and if they had heard of it, would not have thought it so great as their own old Scriptures? Plainly the books of the Bible, which are the Scriptures of only one ancient race, can not be the source of religion, since religion has inspired many other Scriptures in other races; but religion is the source of the Bible as well as of other old religious Scriptures, and is one and the same origin of devotion in all lands and times.

Thirdly. "The sympathy of religions" shows their common origin in human nature. They agree together. They say the same things, utter the same hopes, fears, faiths, struggles, because they all belong to the same human nature. The grander and loftier the things are of which they speak, the more the religions are like each other, because then they are busy with the universal and the eternal. There is a common sense to be met in all the great seers and prophets of whatever times or people. What the trusty steadiness of matter is to Aristotle, Franklin, Napoleon, to be counted on with certainty, that the higher law is to Confucius, Socrates, Paul. What plant-life, animal-life and human society, are to Æsop, Shakespeare, Cervantes, that the spiritual life is to Buddha, Isaiah, John, Jesus.

All these teachers and others such-like, are sure to show this common sense and to say the same things of the eternal and unseen in morals and in Being. The greater they are, the more they are alike, because then they have less of the accidents of time and place and more of the common humanity. Pick out from the sayings of any high seer, Jesus, or any other, the best and highest things he has said, and you will find he gives not anything new to the world, but bears new witness to great truths already old. Every seer finds the earth long full of glories, of visions, raptures, knowledge, faith. He can only point to them once more, add nothing to them but his adoration. No matter how strange, quaint, bygone, half-barbarous are the imagery and legends. Pierce to the few grand thoughts thus clothed. You will feel the beating of the one heart, both human and divine. Jesus taught the nature of God's fatherhood in the exquisite story of the Prodigal; but the psalmist long before had spoken of Him as One who pities us "like as a father pities his children;" and an ancient Hindu cries, "Lord, heaven and earth take refuge with thee as a child with its mother." The same simple-great thoughts look forth everywhere, thoughts of God, of the Unseen, of the Eternal, of Right and Wrong, of Truth, Love, Forgiveness, Holiness, Immortality. Thus religions are at one, because they have one source, namely, the human soul, which is the image, witness and abode of the Eternal Life, and everywhere one in Him. Plainly therefore, if all religions have this common nature because they all arise in the human soul, then they have not their source in any Scriptures said to come from Heaven, but the Scriptures have their source in the religion which lives in mankind, the witness of the human soul to the Infinite and Eternal. The Bible is but an expression or outflow of that religion which is before it and before all Scriptures, the source of all powers, of all hopes, all prayers.

Fourthly. The great prophets themselves say that religion is chief and first in the human heart, and in authority above all the written word. This was the constant stress of Jesus,— "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" in—so much that it was noticed and spoken of that he based not himself on the elders, traditions, writings, but spoke on his

own account, so that they were surprised at him because, "he spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Very well might they say, "Never man spake as he spake;" for any one will startle the world in an instant who will speak wholly from his own soul, throwing to the winds all priests, principalities and powers. This was because Jesus withdrew from the tyranny of the ill-used Bible to the native religion within him, the source of all the grandeur and power which the Scriptures had, the origin not only of their due authority (due to their beauty and sublimity) but of authority itself. It was the same with Socrates. He was accused of setting at naught the common idea of religion. The like befell Paul. He preached a righteousness of faith, that is an inward light and judgment, as being far above all righteousness of the law, that is, servile obedience to the letter of the ceremonies as if religion were founded thereon. He said, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," and "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God," and, "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord over all, and is rich unto all that call upon him."

Thus these four reasons I have given for holding that religion comes not out of the Bible; but that it is first and the Bible comes forth from it: 1. That religion is older than the Bible, and that the elder can not spring from the younger, but the Bible which came after is an expression of the natural religion which was before it: 2. That there are many religions which never knew the Bible, but made Scriptures of their own whence plainly the Bible and all other Scriptures are alike in springing from religion, which thus blooms into holy books and other forms: 3. That the sympathy or likeness of religions, especially in their noblest and highest thoughts, shows that they have all one common source, which is the natural religion of the soul, from which all Scriptures and other forms and expressions thereof, have come forth: 4. That the great prophets, even those enshrined in the Scriptures themselves, always withdraw from the letter to seek the light of the spirit and proclaim its authority.

Whence, again I say, as the Scriptures come forth from religion and not religion from the Scriptures, religion is not



overthrown, nor in any wise shaken, by our critical views of the Bible as a historical expression of religion, nor by our discoveries of the influences which have affected the Book during its many ages of human transmission.

And now I think I hear a voice, perhaps the united voices of many persons, saying to me, "What then is the religion of the soul which you say was before the Bible? We can understand what the Book tells us, that God did many and great miracles to show himself to the Hebrews and that he sent his son and word, Jesus, the greatest miracle of all, to teach men Christianity. But if this be not true, and is only the form in which religion clothed itself in early times and among ignorant peoples, then what is the elder and natural religion? Whence comes it? How is it to be known? and, What does it proclaim? Tell us this."

Ah! if any ask me this, be it known to you that it is a great question, the question of questions; not because it is difficult to answer, as it seems to me, but because it is so grand and so far-reaching. It lays hold of our sense of life, of all our deepest feelings, of the mind's soaring necessity to seek knowledge, of the power of the moral consciousness, of the experience of peace. It is a transcendent theme in itself, which, if there be strength I will strive to follow sometime and will ask you to strive with me up that shining mountain path in the everlasting hills. Meantime I will answer thus—Religion springs in the human soul because of the house the soul lives in. I mean not the body; which I might better call the garment of that mysterious intelligence. I mean the home in which the thinking, feeling, willing, struggling heart and mind finds itself cast to live. Now, if a child grow up in a vile and wretched home, filthy, cruel, base, painful, where no love nor peace ever shine, you will not wonder if the child grow up hardened and depraved till all tenderness and sweetness be gone, and only an ugly, horrible, misshapen Caliban of strength survive. But if the child be cast into a blissful home, clean, sweet, gentle, generous, where love and peace abound, then you wonder not that these same qualities grow large and beautiful with the child's growth, and make a being able to extract life's sweetness and to give to others. So it is with the soul of man,



in which religion grows by reason of the house or home it lives in, because the great and mighty things in that house can call forth the awe, love, praise of the soul, which lie in it waiting to be called, as much as love and gentleness and beauty lie in the child waiting for the home to nurse them. That house in which the soul lives is the INFINITE. The Infinite covers it like a roof. Wherever the eye turns, the Infinite appears. First, the eye gazes into space, and there is no end to be seen or thought. Worlds on worlds are climbing, as if each were some radiant, ambitious creature mounting on another's shoulder thus to scale heaven by a living ladder. But from the farthest star, so far that it might be blotted out and we should not know it for hundreds of years because the light at this moment leaving it takes all that time to reach our eyes, there still are skies as full of stars as our own, and no end and no beginning. Or does the soul turn its eye inward and look at its own being? It sees but a little way. Soon it kneels, faint or awe-struck, gazing into an abyss as dark, as bright, as deep, as close-encircling, as the vault of the skies. In this Infinitude the soul sees love, thoughts, desires, feelings, moving and shining like the stars, rising and setting in itself, past all understanding. What a house to live in! Then wakes the native worship of the soul! Then quickens its awe, praise and prayer! For this house in which it lives, the Infinite, draws it into its own likeness and fills it with its own nature, whereby it knows and adores the glory and beauty of its home, which is the glory of God.

A great French man of science, who has fame for minute and delicate investigations in physical science world-wide, yet has not had his eye closed thereby to the majesty of his soul's home—I mean Pasteur—says:

“What is beyond this starry vault? More starry skies. Well, and beyond that. The human mind driven by an invincible force will never cease asking what is beyond? \* \* \* It is useless to answer? ‘Beyond are unlimited spaces, times, magnitudes.’ Nobody understands these words. He who proclaims the existence of an Infinite—and nobody can evade it—asserts more of the supernatural in that affirmation than exists in all the miracles of all religions; for the notion of the Infinite has the two-fold character of being irresistible and incomprehensible.

When this notion siezes on the mind, there is nothing left but to bend the knee. In that anxious moment all the springs of intellectual life threaten to snap, and one feels near being seized by the sublime madness of Pascal. \* \* \* Everywhere I see the inevitable expression of the Infinite in the world. By it the supernatural is seen in the depths of every heart. The idea of God is a form of the idea of the Infinite. As long as the mystery of the Infinite weighs on the human mind, temples will be raised to the worship of the Infinite, whether God be Brahma, Allah or Jehovah; and on the floor of the temples you will see kneeling men absorbed in the idea of the Infinite. Metaphysics do but translate within us the paramount notion of the Infinite. The faculty which, in the presence of beauty, leads us to conceive of a superior beauty—is not that too the conception of a never realized ideal? What is science, what is the passion for comprehending anything, but the effect of the stimulus exercised on our mind by the mystery of the universe.”

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Having come now to this point, that some things in the Bible, heretofore held sacred and important, must be given up, because they are not true, and yet religion is shaken in nowise, but is the same truth and power in the soul, it will be well to look more closely at *what* we give up when we conclude that the Bible is not a special revelation from God, and see, since religion is not disturbed, what the effect is on the Bible itself in our minds.

First. We must give up the miraculous element. We learn that the strange magical stories of the Scriptures are not narratives of real events, but myths and legends; that sometimes they spring wholly from an idea, being the forms which the idea took in the minds and literature of the people; that sometimes they are founded on some fact, but happened not and could not happen just as they are told. Thus, for example, we

can not believe any longer in the wonders of Samson's strength because we know no man unaided could kill a thousand men with an animal's jaw bone, and that if he had any such strength as that, it could not be lost simply because his hair was cut; and many persons think this is a pure myth, an expression of some of the people's ideas about the sun, having no historical fact under it. Thus, again, we can not believe that all the plagues of Egypt, the division of the Red Sea, and other wonders at the same time, took place as they are told; but these seem to have some foundation in fact. Legends gathered about a remarkable escape of the Hebrews from bondage in Egypt led by a great and strong hero. But whether the miracles be pure myths, enshrining an idea only, or legends, having some kinds of fact in them, the world is giving up the miraculous parts, having learned that such things never take place.

Secondly. We have given up all the local and temporary matter, the prejudices, notions, customs and thoughts of one race at different times in their history. We believe not any longer that these things are rules for us in our different stage of knowledge and altered ways of living. Thus, the laws of Moses about marriage, and many other things, we can not think to be laws commanded by the Most High, but only the ways in which the Hebrews of those early times looked at things. Indeed, Jesus plainly felt in this same way; for he refers to the old laws of an eye for an eye, and of loving one's friend and hating one's enemy, and of marriage, and says they are not good laws and he has better ones to give, the laws, namely, of forgiveness, and of returning good for evil, and of constancy.

Now the question is, What is the effect on our views of the Bible and our feelings toward it, of giving up these two elements as not divinely ordained? The effect is that the grand, beautiful things in the Bible shine all the brighter and stand forth all the greater for the taking away of the transient local things, and the magical things. For when we cease to look at the partial things, then things true and lovely everywhere at all times, appear more plainly and nobly. The same knowledge which shows us that the miraculous stories could not have happened and that the ideas and deeds of half wild and ignorant times can not be laws of God for us, also makes us see better

the meaning of the whole and the sublimity of the great and universal parts of Scripture which came from those deeps of the soul where all times and peoples are alike. It is great and thrilling to see that amid all the strange beliefs, rites, thoughts, feelings of barbarous people, thousands of years ago, the human heart beat, if not so delicately, yet as passionately, joyfully, painfully, as now, and that the soul was filled with awe as solemn as our own, though not so reasonable and enlightened.

To attend first to the miraculous element:

The fact on which to fix the eye is this, that the miraculous stories in the Bible simply are *the form* in which the people produced or embalmed their ideas or efforts. If we understand not this, we can not take another step forward. The early efforts of mankind, whether in thinking or doing, express themselves in this imaginative way. Marvelous story is the form taken by history, and the clothing worn by thought, in primitive times. Imagination then is vivid, feelings strong, religious sentiment active, the critical sense unawakened, writing unknown. Therefore the people mingle all their feelings and deeds with their religion and weave them together in stories which please their fancy and cling to their memory. No one invents them. They spring up like the fancies of children. They are repeated from mouth to mouth and cherished because they fit the mental condition of the people perfectly. Thus all history, all thought, all sentiment and religion, in very early times, find their way into the form of imaginative and magical stories. Now if we dwell on this form as itself the fact and having actually taken place, we shall miss the true substance of the fact which did occur, or of feeling and of thought which were active. If we occupy ourselves with this shell, prizing it for all, we shall be busy with the rigid form outside and shall not know the soft and tender life within. Suppose we were to take the imaginative talk of children for fact. They play that they are all manner of creatures and express their fancies in the most simple and literal way, exactly as primitive races do. They are so simple that for the time being they actually are to their own feelings, steamboats, locomotives, horses, lions, tigers, and all sorts of quaint things, "and every variety of furriner," as Dan'l Pegotty said; and will talk to invisible objects and to creatures of their own

fancy as pleasantly and earnestly as to each other. Suppose, now, when we see a group of children neighing, prancing, roaring and puffing, like horses, wild animals and engines, or talking volubly to chairs and tables, or to invisible things, and pretending to receive answers, we fall to reasoning how they can have been changed so as to make sounds like animals, or how it happens that wood and stone can hear and answer them while we perceive no voice from these objects, or how children can have companions invisible to us,—we shall be very foolish; and thus in fastening on the mere form in which the child-nature utters itself, and in treating this form as literal fact, we shall fail altogether to understand the child nature itself bubbling up in these fancies. Children are running over with the most daring poetical images, such as that the stars are angels' eyes, or the fire-sprinkled skies the under side of heavenly carpets. Suppose we should straddle, like a rustic, over a garden path on which a child had uttered some such courageous thought and with gaping mouth and eyes strained open we should look for the angelic forms owning those starry eyes, or wonder how the gleaming skies could be a carpet and what the upper side might be like; we should get no fact for our pains, and we should miss the blooming fact of childhood's rich fancy. Yet in just this foolish way we have treated the old legends which are the fancies of the childhood of the race; whereby we cheat ourselves with unreal and ghost-like visions, and fail to see the workings of nature. This distinction between form and matter underlies all art, poetry, everything that adds beauty to life. The form *must* be limited, made in some fashion by man, because it is man's way of expressing the facts of life which man made not. "We must take some things for granted;" else all poetry becomes impossible, all pictures deceits; for in actual fact neither do men speak in rhyme and metre, nor exist in miniature on a canvass. Suppose we take the painting on the canvas for literal fact in itself; we shall be occupied with the curious lilliputian creatures we shall think the figures are, and be measuring the inches of them, missing utterly the meaning of the artist, the human passions, or the loveliness of the earth's face, which do actually exist in life and in nature. Yet this would be no more foolish than to take the old religious legends



of humanity for actual facts, when they are only the simple and child-like forms expressing the hopes, fears, loves, faiths, worships and struggles of humanity, which are real and living facts.

Now, when we have given up these tales, when we see they never could happen just as they are told, when knowledge shows us that these quaint stories are not miracles and magical feats but only rhyme, metre, colors containing a far higher order of facts, the facts of the human soul in its struggles, then the effect of dropping the stories as facts is to fasten the eye on the true facts; so that the efforts, throes, triumphs of the heart of man come out to view in their pathos and glory. Thus if we read the many wonders of healing recorded of Jesus, by which were cured all manner of sick people, lame men, lepers, paralytics, demoniacs, blind and dumb, lunatics, those afflicted with dropsy and hemorrhage, and others, and even the dead, these being raised to life,—and if we take all things as true facts just as they are told, and as miracles, we soon lose sight of Jesus, and stand in a dull wonder before these stories. We might even be like the Jews, who are said to have felt no respect for the facts because they thought Jesus had made a bargain with the king of the devils and by this aid did the cures. Whatever we call the power, if we take the stories as magical or miraculous facts, whether the magic be of heaven or of hell, Jesus, the man, vanishes in a shadowy conjuror whom we barely see in the clouds of spells and witchery, because we are so occupied with the amazing marvels. But if we see these stories to be only forms in which the fervent heart of the time expressed the majesty and personal power of Jesus, then we begin to think of *him*. We study the incidents to see what manner of man he was around whom such forms of expression grew up, and how he appeared to the men who, in a childlikeness of ignorance and mental habits, imagined that his presence and touch did such great works. Then his grace, benignity, beauty and force begin to shine. Or if we read how Jesus rose up in a boat and stilled a storm by a word, and think it happened just as it is told and was a miracle, we shall be as much at a loss about Jesus as the disciples were, who were afraid and said, “What manner of man is this that even the winds and waves obey him?” But



if we know that this story is only a primitive form of expression, and that the true matter and fact in it is the impression made by Jesus on his companions, then we begin to have knowledge of a great, serene and glorious man, and not of a mysterious wonder-worker.

What, then, shall we say is the effect of giving up the miracles of the Bible? The effect is that these things which once we thought to be facts and true events we see now to be the form in which quite other and wider facts are expressed; and seeing this, we need give only so much notice to the form as is required to bring the substance to full view. We can fix our eyes on the true and valuable facts which the form enshrines, and know them better. Thus to give up the miraculous events of the Bible is to bring the real truths of it into clearer view, so that the great Book at once seems greater still, full of new beauty and sublimity, because no longer we mistake the form for the fact, but look at the real and true facts themselves.

But there is another effect of giving up the supernatural in the Bible even greater than that already spoken of, bringing the Bible even into a more grand relief. The miraculous or magical element is not only a mere *form of expression*, but it is a *primitive* and *barbarous* form. Therefore, when it is held not only for form but for fact and the magical stories are thought really to have happened, we are in a very low grade of belief, which does more than anything to hide the true sublimity of Nature and of History. For the sublimity of Nature is Order, and the grandeur of historical development is Order. But miracles come trooping in on every page of the Scripture like clamorous children into high company, interrupting but not adding anything. The creation we are told was done by a series of divine biddings issued over chaos as a general commands his troops; then by many special acts of power the unfolding goes on until men become both numerous and wicked; whereat it repents the Creator that he made man at all, and thereon he sends a flood which drowns all the people but one family; afterwards mankind grow again too proud and bold, and the Lord comes down to confound their speech, making many languages instead of one, so that the people no longer understand each other, and wander away by hordes over the earth; then when finally the

Jews are collected and ill-treated in Egypt, they are set free by all manner of astonishing miracles done for them, and led by Moses to the verge of the promised land; there the Lord becomes offended with them and turns them back to wander for forty years up and down a sandy waste till all of that generation have died; then by many other miracles they are brought into Canaan and made to conquer it, while the Lord helps them by drying up rivers, knocking down the walls of cities, making the sun stand still, and confounding the minds of their enemies. Now if we look at all this as form, we shall find many noble poems in it, like the opening chapters of the Bible. But if we take it for fact, there is no grace in it. It is disorder, revision, repentance, petty planning, wavering will. It is no better to the mind and some of it no grander to the imagination than those extraordinary pictures of eastern life, the Arabian Nights. There is nothing magnificent or divine in cursing a country with vermin and reptiles, defiling the wells and killing the first-born of every creature, by way of rescuing chosen people from bondage. As long as the mind dwells on such things as facts, it so will be dazzled by them that it will not see the things which make the true worth of the great Book. Men so might light up the skies with fire-works as to hide all the stars, the flames and fumes of human doings obscuring the everlasting lights. Thus miracles hide the order of nature which reigns in humanity and in history. The mind by dwelling on these flashes which gleam close to the eyes, loses power to see the sober and serene motions of nature's works which go on beyond. And this is what happens with regard to the Bible; for men so have been blinded to its pure and peculiar beauties and true greatness by dwelling on these magical tales, that very many persons even think the whole value of the great book rests on these stories. If we believe not these, they say, we throw the whole Bible away. Is it not a sad thing so to be blinded by these forms in which anciently men have tried to express themselves, as not to see the universal facts of soul which they strove to express, or even the divine and touching fact of the out-singing expression itself, the struggle to utter the facts of life? Yet this is what happens when one thinks the Bible and its worth all to be gone if the miracles be taken away. But, in truth, it is

just then that we can see religion in its own simple nature, and the Bible coming forth from the religion of the human soul. We see these things in their pure simplicity as parts of nature, like the flowers that grow on the earth. "Does God," says Weiss "present himself to our intelligent cognitions as a mere performer of inscrutable things? Then the feeling which I have at smooth feats of Heller and Hermann is religion. Would it not be a pitiful idea to make mysteriousness the exciting cause of human faith? What is more palpable, immediate and familiar than our sense of right or wrong? Yet how we love and adore the cause of this simplicity!"

To gain the use of anything we must know it as it is. For no tool will serve us if we handle it not according to its own nature, but like some other tool which it is not. Nay, more than this,—all that we need for admiration, love, worship, quickening of the soul, is to see things as they are. The more we look at the world, at the past, at mankind, at the present, letting go our prejudices and getting knowledge in place of ignorance, we shall see the more of beauty and grandeur. Knowledge opens the gate of wonder, admiration, awe. There was a time, as even in the Bible we see, when all nature seemed to men alive with spirits, who moved it. Wonderful and delicate creatures lived in trees, in the waters, in the hills and clouds, and made these things move, bloom and open as they do. The sun and moon were living beings, and angels trundled the stars. Knowledge removed all these agents. Have many souls feared to lose all majesty, mystery and beauty in a cold and lifeless level? Have they thought the world of feeling, of passion, of imagination in which early men lived, was dead? But knowledge has only enlarged admiration and dignified emotion. Is not the new thought of a vast unfolding of life something grander than the manufacture of a world? "Suppose," exclaims a philosopher, "we were this instant to lose our knowledge that the earth is a ball, swinging in space, one of a troop of worlds more numerous than the sands on the sea shore, but arranged in systems moving in harmony, instinct with perfect law; and that we were left to think with men a few centuries ago, that the earth is a flat space of uncertain extent, without fellowship in the universe, that the stars are candles and the

sun a moderate ball of fire, going so near the earth, as even Lord Bacon thought, as to burn the snow off the higher mountain tops. Sweep away from us I say this moving, magnificent spectacle of order; sweep away the very conception of natural law, which conception is a new birth in the world; make it impossible for our souls to be touched with that religious sense of unity which now is ours when in the falling of a pebble and the sailing of a star we behold one and the same central force and law; landlock us once more within the limits of the horizon, and let us again see in the incidents of nature, not order and everlasting perfection, but at best only celestial caprice; and who will say that we should not lose truth and spiritual impression which reveal God to every eye, and feed and enlarge every soul? Who will deny that all this knowledge is part of that by which our spirits are this day expanded, our hearts this day touched and awed?"\* If that the life of a tree comes from a nymph in it seem a thought that makes the tree more glorious and mysterious, this is only because we have not learned to see the glory and mystery of ONE LIFE joining all trees and all other things in ONE BODY. Men can invent no way by which anything hath a countenance so grand as it hath in its own place in NATURE'S ORDER.

Thus, when we have given up the miracles as facts, and know that they could not happen as they are told, three great effects follow in our view of the Bible. One is that, not being dazzled and blinded by these showy and glittering things, we shall see the true beauty and worthy things of the Bible, which are sober, solemn, serious. These are the efforts of the human soul to utter its faith and worship; the lofty hymns of praise, prayer or peace; the picture of human struggles, passions, pains, victories in the slow growth of knowledge and of religion—strength, weakness, hope, birth, death, suffering, pity, love. These are the things of the Bible which endear it to the heart, and to the mind, and help us to know mankind and God's dealing with us better, by reason of the moving and wonderful picture of human toils, sorrows and joys so far away.

Another effect is that not being buried any longer in the disorder, derangement and litter of miracles, our eyes are uncovered to see the sublime order of nature which goes steadily

\*David A. Wasson.

on, with no room in it for miraculous influence, nay, between grass-blade and star not room enough for one miracle, gathering all creatures and things into one infinite harmony which is never disturbed. In this unity the Bible itself is included. We see it in its place; not outside of the infinite movement, but in it, a part of it, joined with all Nature, and giving us a sight of the natural unfolding of religious thought.

Another effect is that we have nobler thoughts of God when we have turned utterly away from the miraculous tales of his acts. If we think of him as the magical stories show him, he will seem a king who often finds that he has made mistakes, who repents him of his acts and constantly is correcting his creation, who grows angry and inflicts vengeance by monstrous deeds of power. But if we think of God, as a sight of nature's glorious order will lead us to think of him, he will be the One who lives in all, the Eternal, Infinite, Perfect Order and Life, in all things and all creatures, and filling souls with light and joy; the "Path, Motive, Guide Original and End" of the glories of life and of the serenity of death, the Being of our being "in whom we live and move," "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." When we have turned away from the miraculous stories, we see the Bible, in better relation with these higher thoughts of God, uttered in its most sublime and devout psalms and prayers.

"It is not in nature to respect the false and yet reverence the true." Wollaston made it the essence of religion simply to acknowledge everything to be what it is. To empty out error is to make more room for truth. We have nothing to fear; for we may be sure that when we see *anything* more truly, *all things* will be glorified. "Let me really *know* one divine thing," said John Weiss, "though it compels me to unlearn half a dozen predilections, and I am seeing so much of God instead of a considerable portion of myself."

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So far, now, I have spoken of one class of things which we must drop from our view of facts in the Bible. We have to own that they happened not as they are told, but are forms in which other facts or thoughts are expressed — miraculous



stories, so many in the Bible, so interesting and simple when understood truly, but otherwise misleading, confusing, deranging. Now, I come to other kinds of things also in the Bible which we have to look on as untrue for us in spirit. They are facts, indeed, and important facts when we study the history which the Bible contains; but they hold not any spiritual value for us, nor moral worth. They cannot guide us nor give rules for conduct or feeling. If we should follow them, we should be doing foolish or wrong, or even barbarous and cruel, deeds. These are the local and temporary things in the Bible, belonging to times and conditions long past, and below the spirit of our milder and better times. Let us look at these more closely, by some examples of them; whereby we may see that in giving up these as revealed commands of God, learning that they are only stepping stones or halting places in a nation's growth, we are clearing our minds to know better the nobler uses of the Bible, beholding in its great and lasting truths the face of religion itself.

Now, to lead the way to this knowledge, we have simply to think of this, that nothing is found ready-made, mature or perfect; but everything grows and unfolds. We used to think the Bible contained a religion all complete and ready, the true religion, one and the same in all parts of the book. No doubt many persons think so now. They reason not about it, nor compare one part with another to see if all have the same spirit and equal worthiness.

Many persons read the Bible through in course again and again, thinking they do something religious. But in truth they only take the good things, bad thing and neutral things as all of the same worth; by which they fail to dwell on the great and true things till their quality shines, because they spend so much time on the little and false. Indeed, it is even worse than this; for in old Scriptures the grand, true and lasting things are never so many as the false and fleeting. The great thoughts that uplift and thrill us are very few and simple; but each is so deep that they suffice to draw from forever. But the local and temporary things, the rites, customs, prejudices, events, thoughts, which were the groping of the people after the true, the simple, the infinite—these are very many, various, some-

times crowded together almost without end, and continually changing from age to age. So that if we give heed to these transient things in the Bible, so we shall be lost in the multitude of them as to have neither mind nor time to know the simple, life-giving and glorious things of it. It is these few, simple and great things, moreover, which are the same in all religions and Scriptures. Wherefore, if we miss these in our own path, our minds never will widen to the fellowship of humanity. The unceasing gropings of the early peoples, sometimes very blind, often pitiful, always touching, helped those primitive men, who thus sought the infinite and eternal; but they blind us if we fill our eyes with the clouds of gropings instead of with the holy things sought by them.

We know that in the Bible we see religion in process of growing. We behold the Hebrew race changing from wandering tribes, loosely connected, to a compact nation. This was not a quick change. We can trace it going on for many hundreds of years, through exciting events, sometimes terrible struggles. And side by side with this wonderful change, we can see religion growing, coming forth from low forms into a higher and purer state. Thus, in the Bible we find two great orders of fact, the things toward which the people and their religion were going, and the things which were the different points or stages on the way. We may call these two orders of fact, the end and the means; or the local and the universal; or the temporary and the everlasting. The difference between them is that the universal and everlasting things, to which all religion tends, exist for themselves alone; but the other things, the local and temporary, exist only for the sake of the higher things, being the efforts of men to reach the divine and unchangeable.

Therefore in the Bible we must look for the great and universal truths toward which we see religion going; but we must treat the local and temporary things as simply bygone and done. Thus when we read in a psalm (ciii),

“ Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
And forget not all his benefits:

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Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;  
Who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercy.

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Like as a father pitieth his children,  
So the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

or in the tender Hosea (xi., xiv.)

“They knew not that I healed them!  
I drew them with human cords, with cords of love;  
\* \* \*  
I will heal their backsliding and love them freely;”

and compare these thoughts with the savage fury of the Lord when he put whole cities under the ban and ordered all the people, even the women and children, to be killed; and with his cruelty even to the Israelites when they vexed him;—we see that in the psalm-singer and in the gentle prophet religion has grown up to the thought of a wide, tender, just and pitiful Providence, starting from the thought of a deity profuse in favors to a chosen few but fierce and cruel toward others. Thus again, when we read of the many sacrifices and other rites enjoined in the Bible, and we see that the Israelites could not bear to come to the Lord empty-handed, but wished to appease him with gifts, offerings, sacrifices of animals, and even human sacrifices and killing of children; and then read the words of Micah (vi.),

“Wherewith shall I come before the Lord  
And bow myself down before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
With the sacrifice of calves a year old?  
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,  
With ten thousands of rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression,  
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?  
He hath showed thee, O man, what is good,  
And what the Lord doth require of thee;  
What but to do justly, to love mercy,  
And to walk humbly with thy God,—”

we see that religion has grown from outward things, low forms and cruel sacrifices, to justice, mercy, humility and goodness of heart. When we read of the false and wily plot of Jacob by which he spoiled Esau of his father's blessing and gained it himself, and find that, in spite of his base treachery, he gained the full favor of the Lord and that favor was shown him in a beautiful and ecstatic dream while he was flying from Esau's wrath; and then turn to the words of a psalm (xxiv.),

“Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?  
He hath clean hands and a pure heart;  
Who hath not inclined his soul to falsehood,  
Nor sworn deceitfully;”

and to Isaiah's words (xxxiii.),

"He that walketh righteously and speaketh the truth,  
 He that despiseth the gain of oppressions,  
 That closeth his hands from holding bribes,  
 That stoppeth his ears so as not to hear of blood,  
 And shutteth his eyes so as not to behold iniquity,—  
 He shall dwell on high."

we find that religion had bowed before a deity who could bless a low and hateful cunning with success and favor; but that it had grown out of this low state to be opposed to lies and treachery. Now, when we see these great differences in the Bible touching religion and the nature of God, on the one side anger, fury, cruel sacrifices, base plots, and on the other side mercy, pitifulness, truthfulness and the simple religion of the heart—surely we cannot think these alike, and of the same excellence. We see that the love, goodness and simplicity are universal and lasting thoughts toward which religion was moving; and that the sacrifices, cunning and cruelty were the local and temporary form on the way. And when we see this clearly, cease to trouble ourselves with the by-gone stages of the great movement, and mingle them no longer in our mind with the true and pure picture of religion, then the universal, simple, everlasting thoughts, toward which all the motion was setting, we shall see shining unobscured in beauty and power. Thus religion seems higher and nobler, and the Bible a grander vehicle of it.

But let us take a closer look at the partial and temporary things of the Bible which fall away. It would be a long and useless task to take them all one by one; for, as I have said, they are very many, and the great truths toward which they are growing, are few and alone in their sublimity. But the partial things, belonging to the stages of growth, may be looked at many at a time, in groups; since they spring up in different ways, and those that arise in the same way have a likeness to each other. In fact, we may collect them all into two great groups—those that relate to place or to the locality in which the people lived; and those that relate to time, or to the duration and different stages of the people's development.

First among the passing and shifting things that relate to place I will mention customs. Every place has its customs. Sometimes they can be traced to other places from which they came, or far back to some known beginning in the place where they are found; but very often nothing is known of their origin

or age. They simply are found in a particular place, and nowhere else, and no one knows how they came there. Often these customs have no part in the religion of the place; but sometimes they are religious customs; and the older and more mysterious they are, the more they will be likely to gather around religion. Now, there are many such customs in the Bible, which are put forth as a part of religion in that great book. Yet we can see very plainly that they are things having no needful part in simple religion; and that often no one knows, and the Jews themselves knew not, how or when they sprang up. The observance of the Sabbath is such a custom. Moses did not ordain it as a new thing; he found it existing. But perhaps he changed and turned it into a special devotion to the god Yahweh, whom he wished the people to worship alone or chiefly. No one knows how old it is, or where it arose. The week of seven days is found nowhere else, except among the Egyptians, and the special day of rest nowhere but among the Israelites. Very likely the week arose from the worship of the seven planets, the sun, the moon, Mars, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter and Saturn, which were known from very ancient times; wherefore seven always has been held a sacred and mysterious number. Very likely one of these days was held especially holy because the god to whom it belonged was especially feared; and it seems plain that Moses, or the movement which bears his name, may have turned this observance toward Yahweh and increased its sancity. But all this is uncertain, lost in the remote past. The Jews themselves not always observed the Sabbath.\* Not till a very long time after Moses did they become very strict about it, and some were much more strict than others. Yet this custom, of which so little is known, has been lifted by many people into a necessary part of religion, as actually commanded by God; because in reading the Bible the eye has not been fixed on the great and everlasting thoughts toward which religion was moving, but on the passing things which were simply like fleeting waves in the motion.

Other partial and passing things arising from place, spring from climate and from geographical features. As it is plain that the climate in which a people lives, the earth's features

\* Nehemiah xiii., 15.



of plain, mountain and sea, fertile lands or deserts, and the heat or cold, must affect deeply the character of the people, so it is certain these things will affect their religion also, and especially in the beginning. For at first men are not able to weigh one phase of nature against another and pierce to the meaning of the whole; but they take for the whole the one place where they are. If the people live where the earth is fertile and the sea at hand, or ample lakes and rivers, it is likely they will be shepherds, fishermen and tillers of the soil. The religious rites of such people are gentle, like their occupations. But if a tribe live in dense forests where many wild beasts roam; or in rocky and hilly places where they must hunt in order to live, they will be warlike and fierce; and the religious rites of such people are wild, harsh and cruel. Among the earliest objects of worship are the powers of nature, the sun, the winds the rain, the sea, the rivers, the forces of the earth. Now, when a people lives where these powers are gentle and helpful, where the sun shines temperately, the winds are peaceful, storms rare or slight, the earth bountiful, so that plenty and quiet surround the people, the gods they worship are kind and placable, even complacent and pleasure-loving, and the religious rites are not only gentle and humane but sometimes even sink into debauches and sensual excesses. When a tribe, on the other hand, inhabits a rough and barren country, rocky and wild, exposed to floods or fierce storms, or to a scorching and untempered sun, their gods are fierce, cruel, revengeful, and they are worshiped with harsh and bloody rites; but also they are austere, stern, pure and holy. Among the eastern nations from whom our ideas come, the place of punishment hereafter was thought to be a fiery furnace, because their hot climate gave them a terror of heat and a pining for coolness; but among arctic people, hell is a place of perpetual freezing, because their climate makes them dread the cold and long for heat. Now, some of the temporary things in the Bible sprang from such influences of climate. The Hebrews had an austere and holy god, Jehovah or Yahweh, because their ancient seats were in a sterile and forbidding country, where men had to work to live; but he was also cruel and harsh as well as holy, and therefore the religion of the people had many fearful

rites in it, and their history is full of religious terrors. But these we see to be only the struggles of human hearts to find the true and eternal among the conditions in which they were placed. It is a history full of a terrible kind of pathos, of a great but sombre magnificence too; but we must not take these wild harsh things as part of religion, but as springing from the conditions of the people while they were seeking pure religion. They were the partial and passing things on the way, while the human heart was going toward the everlasting, sublime, simple thoughts of religion.

Another way, depending on place, in which partial and shifting elements entered into the growth of religion in the Bible was by historical events and influences. The different peoples whom the Jews met in their wars and trading, affected their character and their religion. Thus they gathered ideas which sprang not up among themselves at first, or they changed or intensified thoughts which they had already. I will take one example of such historical influence. About six hundred years B. C., the Jews were conquered by the Chaldeans and carried off prisoners to Babylon. After they had lived there about fifty years, Cyrus subdued the Chaldeans and permitted the Jews to return to their old homes. Many did so, but also many stayed in Babylon and remained a long time in close contact with the Persians. These Jews were not unmindful of their country, race or religion. They kept a warm interest in the fortunes and efforts of their brethren who had returned to Judea, in the temple which they rebuilt, and in all the religious hopes and prides of their race. Indeed they studied their religion so much that they collected and drew up careful laws and rules for it, which were taken to Jerusalem and became very sacred and powerful. But also they were influenced by Persian thoughts from which they took some new ideas or some changes in their own old notions. One instance was a belief in wicked spirits or bad angels and especially in one ruling wicked spirit, Satan, which now began to take deep root among the Jews, from the Persian influence. Before this the Jews had ascribed everything to their god, Yahweh or Jehovah. He, they said, did everything, made everything, the bad and harmful things as well as the good things. But it was hard for them to think that the deity

whom they believed to be so holy and so favorable towards his people could make also so much evil for them to bear. Now, the Persians had an easy way of meeting this trouble. They believed in two principles or powers, a good one and a bad one; and from these two came, they said, the strife of good and evil in the world. This thought the Jews took, and henceforth the belief in Satan and in his wicked spirits grew and prevailed; so that we find it appearing in a very strong form in the New Testament, where Satan is said to tempt Jesus, and do many things; and his demons are constantly bringing diseases and miseries among men. Now, this is one of the things in the Bible which we must simply put away. We cannot think there is any arch-wicked spirit who delights in evil, whose whole business is to struggle with the good power of God and to prowl among men to do them all the harm he can and to carry them off to his horrible home if possible. But we can see clearly how this idea crept into the Bible, whence it came, and even when it began to be taken.\* So that if we use this knowledge in reading the Bible, we shall not fall into the foolish thought that Satan and his imps are a part of religion and do really exist, because the Bible speaks of them. We shall see that they belong not to the simple and grand ideas toward which religion was going slowly, with so much pain and struggle, but still going; but that they are among the passing things on the way, got by the Jews from a foreign source and taken by them just as they might have adopted some art or industry.

From the temporary things in the Bible which arose from the conditions of the *places* the people lived in, turn now to those changing and fleeting things which arise from the mysterious fact of *time*.

One of the chief of these is general ignorance. It takes time to learn anything. It takes a very long time to learn much. Men have been hundreds of hundreds of years learning

\* The designation "The Devil" occurs not at all in the Old Testament. The proper name "Satan" is in Job i, ii, where he is a good angel whose duty is to serve as opponent or prosecutor and push the case against Job as far as possible and put him to the most thorough trial; in Zechariah iii, where he appears as in opposition in such a manner as to incur reproach or rebuke; finally in i Chronicles xxi (third century B. C.), where he is given a distinctly evil character. These four places contain all that is said of Satan in the Old Testament; but in the New Testament the name abounds, as does also the designation "The Devil."

about the most common things around them—what rain is, how the winds rise, how plants grow, what light and heat and sound are, how the sun shines, how the stars move, and other countless things, some of which indeed we still understand very little. The ancient Hebrews knew nothing of these things, and the Bible is full of their ignorance. They thought the Creator made the earth and the heavens in a few days, and then brought all the beasts to Adam to be named. They supposed that the earth was a plain with a crystal lid arched over it; and above the arch their deity had his palace with troops of angels to do his bidding and with hosts of stars over which he ruled. They believed their god came down from his palace sometimes to walk on the earth, and then made bargains with men and with other creatures. If wild beasts and birds ceased to annoy the people, they said, Yahweh had made a covenant with these creatures by which they were persuaded to be quiet.\*

Now, this ignorance did no harm to these ancient men. They were learning as quickly as they could. They had a great deal to do in striving with powers of nature which they understood not. They had to pass through many steps of thought while they were learning; and they toiled along very well. A great deal of our happiness springs from their labor, because they did their parts so earnestly and so well. But their ignorance which harmed them not, would harm us very much, if, being so many hundreds of years forward in knowledge, we now should go back to this ignorance for our religion. Yet, so we do, if we take these old ideas, which were only steps on the way, because the people had not had time to learn any more,—if we take these, I say, to be the high and heavenly religion of nature toward which the soul of a great race was going. This is to read the Bible, not as living intelligences now, but as if we lived when the Bible was making. This is to mistake a stage of progress toward religion, as the people did who were in it, for the purer and grander religion to which they were going. But we have looked on that noble religion, as they reached it; we have heard the songs and the psalms of it, and read its simple yet infinite thoughts; and we ought not to make that mistake.

\* See Hosea ii., 18: compare Gen. ix., 10.

Another group of ideas in the Bible which we have to leave behind us, as indeed the people that once cherished them left them behind, is those forms of thought which make the natural order of development. Not only did not religion rise instantly mature and perfect in the Bible, and not only does it never appear thus in history, but it follows always a like manner of growth and passes through like stages everywhere. This is because the human mind is the same in all places, and unfolds in the same way. Therefore there is a law of the growth of religion, a method or order according to which the transient stages on the way appear and disappear, while the people go toward pure and simple religion. The first form of religion is the worship of all manner of lifeless objects; anything whatever, no matter how small, or ugly, or grotesque, may be worshiped at this first stage, even objects made by the hands of the people themselves. But the objects are conceived to be living and powerful, in some sense, because of a spirit or soul dwelling in them. The worship springs from fear. The gods and the people are equally selfish, and the worship consists in gifts, sacrifices and servile ceremonies, by which to appease the gods and win their favor. Signs of a higher stage appear when the people worship great or living objects in nature like trees, large bodies of water, animals and especially the sun, moon and stars. These stages of religion often are found together, the people worshipping many things at once, from unhewn stones to the stars. This religion belongs to the tribal condition of the people, before national life has begun. Then comes another stage; the tribes become a nation, common traditions are handed down, and the many different objects of worship pass into a number of "great gods each ruling some separate part of nature or of the life of men." This is polytheism. Gradually, either by the supremacy of one of the gods who grows so great that all the others are neglected for this one, or by other ways, another stage enters; the many gods vanish and only one is worshiped. At the same time a holy book, a scripture, a law arises, which is the sacred rule and body of the religion, containing the word of its wonders, the forms of its worship and its poetry and precepts. Finally these ideas gradually are elevated, chastened, spiritualized, by the growth of knowledge and by the softening of manners and of feelings.



The last stage,—simple, pure, natural religion is reached. Now these stages are seen plainly in the Bible. Early in their history the people worshiped stones;\* and indeed for many years after Moses, they are found worshiping many different gods.† But they had one god whom they thought greater than all the rest, Jehovah or Yahweh, as especially Israel's god. There were other gods, but Yahweh was above all, and was the god of Israel alone, and Israel could have no other. The next step was to call the other gods "false gods," and to say that Yahweh alone was a living spirit and true God. After this, the thought of Yahweh was chastened, glorified and endeared, till the merciful and holy image seen in the psalms and prophets arises. Side by side with this movement, is a like softening and chastening of religious rites. We see them in the Bible, coarse, riotous, and even cruel, as in the story of Abraham and Isaac, and of Jephtha's daughter; we see them also grow better and more chastened, till even the spiritual thought is attained, and Jesus says, "God is spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth;" and a psalmist sings (ii.),

"O Lord open thou my lips,  
That my mouth may show forth thy praise,  
For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it;  
Thou delightest not in burnt offering.  
The sacrifice which God loveth is a broken spirit;  
A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Here in sayings like this of Jesus and like this of the psalm singer we stand on the heights of the Bible, on the grand and simple religious thoughts which come out of the human heart by nature and always thrill the soul. To this the people with their religion were struggling, climbing, through all their strange, wild, wonderful, pathetic history, for so many hundreds of years. Here we rest. Here we fasten our eyes. All other things are but stopping places and stages on the way to simple religion, enshrined at last in the psalmist's pious prayer.

Let me sum up these facts in a few lines. This is the truth—that we have not in the Bible a religion ready-made for us, complete and perfect, consistent and equally good in all

\* See "Bible for Learners," Vol. I., chap. xxiii. For example of ascribing some kind of power or consciousness to stones, see Joshua, xxiv., 26-27; also Gen. xxviii., 18-22.

† This fact is mentioned abundantly in the prophets, and throughout the Old Testament: *e. g.* Hosea (about 800 B. C., 500 years after Moses) ii, 8; xiii, 2; iv, 17; xi, 2.

parts of the Book, divinely ordained and communicated. This, I say, we have not. It were not in the order of nature, which is an order of growth. But, as in all other religious records, so in the Bible, we have religion growing, from feeble, low and wild beginnings in strange fancies and barbarous rites, to the few simple but mighty faiths clothed with power to heal and bless the child and sage alike. Therefore the Bible holds one order of facts which are the thoughts of religion to which the people are growing, and another of facts which are only the stages and forms of the growth as it takes them up and then drops them, on its way. Therefore we read and value the great Book well when we search it for the simple, immutable and eternal truths of natural religion which were the aim of the struggle and the motion; but we read it ill and miss this simple sublimity if we mingle therewith the shifting forms and "broken lights" on the way.

This truth is a very plain one. When we hear Jesus saying, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you and pray for them that use you despitefully and persecute you," and on the cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do;" and then we read David's curses on his enemies (if David wrote psalm cix.),

"May his days be few  
And another take his office!  
May his children be fatherless  
And his wife a widow!  
May his children be vagabonds and beggars,  
And seek their bread far from their ruined dwellings!  
May a creditor seize on all that he hath,  
And may a stranger plunder his substance!  
May there be none to show him compassion  
And none to pity his fatherless children!"

we see that we are in the presence of two very different spirits, and that one is good and one is bad. Nay, we may turn from the bad and cursing spirit to a devout and beautiful song perhaps also by David (Ps. cxxxix.),

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit,  
And whither shall I flee from thy presence?  
If I ascend into heaven thou art there!  
If I take the wings of the morning  
And dwell in the uttermost part of the sea,  
Even there shall thy hand lead me,  
And thy right hand shall hold me!  
If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me,  
Even the night shall be light about me.  
Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee,  
But the night shineth as the day."

“The sweet notes of David’s prayer,” says Theodore Parker, “his mystic hymn of praise, so full of rippling life, his lofty psalm which seems to unite the warbling music of the wind, the sun’s glance and the rush of the lightning; which calls on the mountain and the sea and beast and bird and man to join his full heart,—all these shall be sweet and elevating; but we shall leave his pernicious curse to perish where it fell.”

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Here, in conclusion, may I not look briefly at some of the great traits of this great Book, our Scriptures?

No book in the world is so useful and needful for the *study* of religion; and this study is very great and far-reaching. It has been said well that while *religious questions* change from age to age, the *question of religion* is perennial. In these times, religious questions change very fast. They are very different now from those that filled our minds fifty, or even twenty-five, years ago. While yet we are busy with some questions, others loom vast and vague on the horizon. Soon they come whirling down like storm-clouds greater than any before met, so that those already past seem like pleasant gales or easy exercise when we are in the thick of the new tempest. But however the religious questions vary, coming and going, the question of religion is the same, and has been so for many thousands of years, while the shifting forms and transient questions have risen and fallen. Wherefore joyfully we may think that all questions which task us now will pass in like manner, and that the storms of thought always will seem but fresh and vigorous gales when we look back on them, while the power of religion will be the same, to glorify and exercise us. The *study* of religion as a vast fact and interest of mind, a factor in all human movements, an inevitable presence in all nations, races and times,—this never ceases to charm attention and to enforce homage. Now for this study, as I have said, no book

is such a treasury of help and of knowledge as the Bible. For in it we may see, though not the actual beginning of religion, which is lost in far antiquity, yet plain traces of the lowest forms of religious thought; and these we study in their changes and progress to a very high sublimity. For the Bible holds the loftiest and most complete utterance of religion to be found in any Scripture. I say not that it is complete, for no one race, however rich, could have perfect wholeness in such a mystery of life as religion; but it is the *most complete*, the richest, most sublime reach of religious expression attained by any race or any Scriptures.

But to be able intellectually to get this great value from the Bible, two powers of mind are needful, first to understand it, then to judge it. For if we know not what the Bible is, we can not judge it; and if we judge it not, we are not taught from it but subjected to it.

Remember that the Bible is not our only source of religious thought, even though it be the loftiest scripture. From many other sources we have gathered a vast store of food for faith and feeling in religion, by which we get power. This food has been harvested by the large study of Nature as wonderful and holy law in all things, binding the great and small, near and far into one life, from grain of sand to monstrous sun in the heavens, from a little animal which is no more than a drop of jelly to the body of a man; and of history as not a petty or proud play of princes or powers, each doing what it will as if there were no other, but as a field of human movements where laws act which are so strong and vast that they can be seen only when we look far back, or over huge masses of people, because they sweep such immense groups into their action and span such distances of space and time. Now by learning these things we have food for religion, which then grows strong in us to interpret the Bible wisely and truly, and then to judge it in its facts and in its thoughts after we understand it. Surely it is wise and right that our religious knowledge, gathered from all sources, should explain and judge one source thereof, the Bible. Therefore we must use the Bible with this fair and instructed freedom whereby to study religion in it.

Heretofore in this sermon, I have told many things which

the Bible is not, and therewith many things also which it is, relating especially to the history and religion of the Hebrews, and of the human mind. But now I will look a little at its general traits as the literature of a wonderful people during an eventful and tragical history. I can not cast even a glance at that history in detail, in the space which I have, and I have said of it already all that I can say, perhaps all that is needful in this sermon, to show the relation of the Bible and religion. Even to look at the Bible merely as literature in this one discourse, I must look very swiftly, and seize in passing only the great traits of it.

1. The Bible, which is the literature of Israel, is above all things a religious literature. Here we have to take account of that wonderful fact in history which we may call race-endowment, that is, the peculiar quality and character of a people by which it is fitted to make a special contribution to human thought or well-being which no other people has given in so large measure or in so perfect form. However trite it be, let me repeat the main points of this notable fact. If we look at our civilization, we may divide its resources into three great groups. One group we may call Law, meaning thereby all that relates to civil polity, to state-craft, to the joint action and organic oneness of great numbers of men who form thus a community or commonwealth or nation. For this part of our common life, we are indebted mainly to Rome. That mighty city created an empire of law and of civil authority which the whole world accepts. Another group of the resources of our civilization we may call Knowledge, meaning thereby all that relates to our understanding of history, of nature, and of our own minds; also all that underlies the useful and beautiful industries, philosophy, science, mathematics, art. For these things we are indebted to Greece. That land of thought, art and song, "conquered its conquerors," and imposed its letters, its imagination, its beautiful forms, on Rome and on the world. It is not a gracious task to compare such bequests with others, as with the Roman or with the Hebrew, to ask which is the greater. For they are all so mingled in us in our civilization that to withdraw one to look at it by itself, is to mangle all. Rather I would say of all these great gifts which unite in one heritage, as the ancient preacher said,



" All the works of the Lord are good,  
 And he will give every needful thing in due season.  
 So that a man can not say, This is worse than that;  
 For in time they shall all be well approved."

The third group of resources we may call Religion, meaning thereby all that pertains to the feeling of dependence on a higher Power, to the sentiment of the Infinite and Eternal, to the thoughts which bind us to our Origin; to worship, devotion, awe. Also we must include the rule of conduct and the thought of duty. Now for these last elements, the criticism of conduct and the idea of duty, we seem not to owe anything to one people above another. Everywhere this ethical weight of feeling and of thought is met. We find all peoples talking and writing of duty, of the laws and reasons of right conduct, in nearly the same way and with the same deep earnestness. This is a great and glorious fact. But the other heritage which we call religion, the awe and feeling of Infinite Majesty, and of One Eternal Life, as we find it woven with form and worship in our civilization, we owe to the race of Israel. This people had no other message to give, no other possession to bequeath. It never had any "plastic arts, nor rational science, nor political life, nor military organization." But religion with this fiery people was a fervor, a life, a devotion, a fanaticism even, if we take it at its worst estate, the like of which the world knows not elsewhere. This race observed not, nor asked questions, nor reasoned nor doubted. It simply said, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and neither knew nor cared to say more. It, above all the great races, starting from the same low forms of religion, worshiping stones and divers natural objects and many gods, created a grand and devout monotheism, which equally held fast to the whole idea of Deity,—living Will, Thought, Love,—and proclaimed that Deity ONE, Infinite and Eternal. By this thought, they have subdued the world. "The whole world, if we except India, China, Japan and tribes altogether savage, has adopted the religions"\* of that race of which Israel is the leading people and the fountain of their religious influence. "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath us are the everlasting arms;" "My soul thirsteth for God, the living God;" "He is the living God, and steadfast for-

\* Renan.

ever;" "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary:" "Hear, O Israel, the Eternal is God! the Eternal is One!"—these are such sayings of its faith as Israel uttered in the highest passages of the Bible, which are very numerous. By them it has given the world its language of religion. When we utter the hopes, the aspirations, the trust, the devotion, the thanksgiving, the dependence, the lowliness and the greatness of the soul, we have no forms so grand, so simple, so lofty as the prayers and faith-cries of Israel.

2. The Biblical literature has a high and pure moral element in it. But in point of morals, it is a noble fact that we may learn of all peoples alike and find the sages of every land full of divination on life's daily duties. Yet not all see the same points with equal clearness or dwell on them with the same force. Sometimes it is said that the ethics of the Bible dwell but little and somewhat meanly on the responsibilities and reciprocities of family life; on the humane virtues toward animals and children; on the duty of guarding health, of mental culture, of public spirit; on the rightful dignity and self-sovereignty of women; on business virtues, prudence, foresight; and it is true that the Bible rather commands than disowns (though with glorious exceptional passages) that form of hatred and strife called the "odium theologicum," which is dissention, aversion and offence for difference in faith. But many of these duties we should not expect to find known to a people whose whole life was theological and religious, whose whole idea of morals would be affected by their stern faith, with no tincture of philosophy. Herein we must gather from all fields, and bring all the peoples to add their portions of insight to the Biblical ethics. Herein, also, we must bring our knowledge from all sources to the judgment of the Bible, that we may see and say wherein its ethics fall short of the needs of many-sided life. For in this very carefully we must beware of being subjected to the Book, by reason of which subjection indeed, many evils, like slavery, persecution, bad-faith, have been excused or approved. But we shall find it very clear in the Bible that no outward forms or observance of religion can make up for evil deeds, and the best

worship is a good and simple heart. "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God." "Not every man that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom; but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven."

"Mark the perfect man and behold the upright;  
The end of that man is peace.

"For light is sown for the righteous,  
And gladness for the upright in heart."

"The stars in the courses uphold the righteous,  
The stones of the field are in league with him."

"I desire mercy and not sacrifices,  
The knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

Also many virtues find high expression, like forgiveness, returning good for evil, and some forms of justice. For these we may read the Bible and find great strength in so reading it, if we read it well, not taking every place alike, but seeing the noble and high things, and cleaving to them for their own value and power.

3. Beauty, very great beauty, is a trait of the Bible. And this beauty is more valuable to us because it is of a peculiar kind, the wealth of oriental imagination with which we come into no familiar contact except in the Bible—a magnificence of imagination, joyous in its splendors. Thus for example a prophet sings of the glory kept in waiting for Israel:—

"O thou afflicted, beaten with the storm, destitute of consolation!  
Behold I lay thy stones in cement of vermilion,  
And thy foundations with sapphires.  
And I will make thy battlements of rubies,  
And thy gates of carbuncles,  
And all thy borders full of precious stones.

\* . \* \*

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
Neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
So are my ways higher than your ways  
And my thoughts than your thoughts.  
For as the rain and the snow descend from heaven,  
And return not thither,  
But water the earth, and make it bear and put forth its increase,  
That it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater,  
So shall my word be that goeth from my mouth;  
It shall not return to me void.  
But it shall bring to pass that which is my pleasure,  
And it shall accomplish that for which I send it,  
For ye shall go out with joy  
And be led forth with peace.

The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing,  
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
Instead of the thorn shall grow up the cypress tree,  
And instead of the bramble shall grow up the myrtle tree.

\* \* \*

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together  
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox,  
And dust shall be the food of the serpent.  
They shall not hurt, nor destroy, in all my holy mountain,  
Saith the Lord! "\*

Sometimes the simplicity is exquisite—"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." I think I may quote for its delicate and blossoming beauty, one of the very few songs of love which the Biblical literature has preserved:

"The voice of my beloved!  
Behold, he comes,  
Leaping upon the the mountains,

Bounding over the hills,  
Like a gazelle is my beloved,  
Or a young hind.  
Behold he stands behind our wall;  
He is looking in at the windows;  
He glances through the lattice.  
My beloved speaks and says to me,  
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away!  
For lo! the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone;  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
The time for the singing birds is come,  
And the voice of the turtle is heard in the land;  
The fig tree is spicing its green fruit  
The vines in blossom give forth fragrance.

\* \* \*

My beloved is mine and I am his;  
He feeds among the lilies.  
When the day breathes and the shadows flee away,  
Come again, my beloved, like a gazelle, or a young hind,  
Upon the craggy mountains."†

4. Tenderness is a trait of the Biblical literature. Witness the tenderness that hovers around Jesus, his love for the poor, the forlorn and forsaken, the outcast and despised; his love for his friends, his lament over Jerusalem, the parables of the Prodigal and of the Good Samaritan. In the old Bible, also, there is David's lament for Absalom, the devoted friendship of David and Jonathan, the exquisite pastoral of Ruth, the tender story of Joseph, Nathan's compassionate parable of the poor man's ewe lamb. There is very tender feeling in these and other places, like a soft light through rain drops.

\* Is. lv., lxv. † Canticles.

5. A trait of the Hebrew literature in the Bible is its sublimity. This, indeed, is a trait in which it stands not only unequaled but unapproached in all the literature of the world. There are no splendors in any language that equal the vast magnificence and grandeur of places in Isaiah, in the Psalms, and in that wonderful poem, unequaled in the world's treasury, the book of Job. Coleridge says, "Sublimity is Hebrew by birth." A critic has exclaimed what an effect would follow if now suddenly a collection of poems like the Psalms were launched anew on the world, the like never known before. What wonder, delight, awe and praise would arise! But in truth "the ear is accustomed to these admirable productions before the mind can comprehend their meaning or feel their beauty," so that it is very hard, in mature life, to bring the mind to them with that fresh attention which would perceive their power and greatness. The magnificence of the imagery, the stern and strong brevity of the expression, the solemnity of the thought, combine in a sublimity which we can not read without awe. And when we reflect that these mighty writings were not the secret or silent work of a few retired poets waiting for ages to justify their grandeur, but actual addresses and appeals to the people, made to move their conscience or will to definite ends, what a sight opens before us!\*

6. Another trait of the Bible is the grand characters that are in it. Moses, a colossal figure in the dim past; Jesus, a wandering peasant whose glory has moved the world; Paul, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Nathan, and, if not on this level, yet mighty, Samuel, David, Saul, Deborah, and many more. These are great figures, the like of which are found crowded in no other literature so small in extent and of one sole people.

\* I have met a story of an obscure Scotch peasant, who, calling on business at a gentleman's house, in Edinburgh, saw a bust of Shakespeare and these lines from "The Tempest" inscribed beneath it,

"The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve,  
And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,  
Leave not a rack behind."

The gentleman seeing the peasant's eyes dwell on these lines, asked him whether he had seen the equal of them in sublimity. The peasant answered, "Yes I have; the following passage in the book of Revelations is much more sublime,—"I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them."



7. Another trait is that these mighty characters are seen in rigorous action. They are not described. Seldom are their features of face or form referred to. But they appear as living and striving parts of the sad, tumultuous, fecund, tragical, majestic history of their race. We see them before us, all human, every muscle tense with their action, and their words flying from burning lips, like fiery ingots rolling from a Titan's forge.

8. Another trait in Biblical literature is the prophets. This great and remarkable order of men, which has so large a part in the history, life and genius of Israel, has no parallel in any other people. They came forth and announced themselves as direct messengers from God. No one appointed them or sanctioned them. Their call was from within, moral and spiritual. They dwelt as might happen, in solitudes, or in communities of their own, or in their ordinary homes; whence they went forth preaching, rebuking kings to their faces, threatening and terrifying, predicting or enforcing woes on all tyranny, and denouncing fiercely whatever was contrary to the faith of Israel. Legends and miracles grew up about them. They were called soothsayers, and looked on themselves as such. They opposed all foreign alliance or union. They were the *fire* at which gathered and burned with a fierce heat the religious life and sometimes the religious fury of the race. These men were very numerous. They even had schools, or some sort of loose training for the office, which has been called "a rude germ of a national university," preserving and intensifying the religion, tradition and zeal of the people. They had discipline, wild music and song, and sometimes frenzied ecstasies. They were a power in the realm as distinct as the monarchy, and sometimes of equal authority. The king must consult them on important measures. They were men of action, abroad among the people, inciting or stirring them, sometimes making and leading revolutions against tyrannical rulers. They nourished and quickened the nation's proud sense of peculiar and chosen dignity. They were benefactors of the ignorant, depositaries of the slender science of the times, healers of disease by simple remedies. They were the people's authors, national historians, orators and poets, and in this capacity the source of the world's most sublime lyrical poetry. This order

of men, as I have said, is a peculiar feature of the Bible and of Hebrew history, the most complete expression of the genius and glory of Israel, more peculiar to Israel than philosophy or art to Greece. It began in zealous ecstasies, which often were frenzied, and grew to be a majestic vocation, a great order in the state. We can hardly bring our minds to imagine such a condition. "Suppose," says Renan, "a solitary dweller in the quarries near our capitals, going thence from time to time to the palaces of sovereigns, forcing an entrance, and in an imperious tone, announcing to kings the approach of revolutions of which he has been the promoter. The bare idea makes us smile. Such, nevertheless, was Elijah." If we read the wonderful literature in the Bible as we ought, attaining a sympathy for it and a knowledge of the mental and moral conditions of the times and people, we shall see these great sights pass before us, this army of prophets with their burning and fiery deeds—a sight astonishing, unique in the history of the world, and sublime.

Thus very swiftly, as by a bird's-eye view from a height, I have glanced at the chief traits of the literature which we call the Bible. Now the question has been in this sermon of the relation of the Bible to religion. Permit me a closing word on that point.

Closely concerned with religion are the three divisions of our mental and moral action, Conduct, Thought, and Feeling. Let us look at these and the Bible together.

1. How stands the Bible related to conduct? If we can read the Bible well, that is if we can take the things which are the true aim of it and not the things which are dropped on the way, we shall find the Scriptures great inspiration to herosim, nobleness, and faithfulness. But if we must try to combine these high things with other things not high, and to treat all parts alike, as of equal truth and beauty because in the same Book, then we shall be confused and misled. A high standard is a great help in conduct. The Bible will give us this if we look at the highest in it. But it gives us no standard if we take all as of the same worth and try to combine the high and low in one. Now, when we consider how much in life depends on our picking out the good and leaving the bad in the mingling

off them in the things about us, we see that thus we use the Bible only as we must use all things, and we shall be helped to judge truly and choose nobly in life if in the Scriptures we judge well and choose the high things.

2. How is the Bible related to thought? This is a very simple matter. The help of thought is to think. Now thinking is arrested if we have a divine revelation in the Bible, perfect, miraculous, requiring therefore an entire submission. We have then not to think, but only to take without question. Besides, more than this, we must take then the poor and the good thoughts, the barbarous and the gentle thoughts, as all of the same worth, joined equally in one divine command. Thus not only is thinking stopped, but all the natural conclusions of thought are confounded and set at naught. Therefore, for the dignity and justice of thought, we must read the Bible not as an issue from heaven with the right to rule over us, but as a growth of earth which we have right and duty to question and to judge. Whereupon we must judge it and fashion it in with our lives, by taking the spirit and aim of its high and grand things, to which religion has been growing within its record. So used, thought remains free, gathering instruction and light.

2. How is the Bible related to Feeling? I have said that religion is older than the Bible and that the Scriptures sprang from it and not religion from them. This is true, but it follows not thereupon that religion gets no help from the Bible. Likewise love is greater than the home and created the home, in the far, misty ages when men began to conceive of the dignity of parental cares and to feel their permanence. But also the home helps, expands, dignifies, chastens and glorifies love. When from animal wandering and chance pairing, the home emerges, it will be a rude form indeed; but it will improve the love a little. The improved love next makes a better home, which again will refine the love. Thus a sweet and pure tradition grows up, the love and the external form of love, which is the home, growing rich and beautiful together. So religion is older than the Bible, but the Bible helps to magnify and glorify religion if it be used well, because the Bible is the expression of the struggle upward of the religious nature of man. Herein is a subtle law manifest which attends all expression. All expression or form reacts

on that which is expressed, to heighten, confirm and enlarge it. Beautiful expression will help the feeling to become more beautiful, which again dignifies the expression, which again chastens the feeling; and so on, in a pleasing and blessed progress. But here is a happy point, to which I pray your attention; when the feeling seeks not only to express itself, but to express itself in a beautiful way, the expression is always, by a blissful law, a little more beautiful than the feeling is at its *common* level. For the expression, and the search for beauty thereby, is a great energy of soul, and lifts the whole being for the time. And, moreover, the feeling is at its highest reach of strength and loveliness when *beauty* of expression is sought. Then this beautiful form reacts on the feeling which produced it to bring the common level of that feeling to this height of beauty to which it dashed upward in the expression. This new level attained, a new wave-crest dashes up a farther height, making a new expression enshrining the best and most beautiful feeling. And so on, as long as feeling can be glorified and expression made beautiful. They grow lovely by necessity together. Therefore the highest, or a very high and noble, expression of feeling, beautiful and lofty, is a very precious possession, a delight to the present feeling, a continual call for it to come up higher, and source of strength for the ascent. Now such expression of religious feeling we have in the Bible, if we set our eyes on the sublime, beautiful and tender things in it—if we take the highest to be that at which all the lower things are aiming and the point to which we should go. Then the grand and lovely things in it, the expression most mighty for dignity, grace and glory which all the ages yet have found for religion, will attract religious feeling continually into its highest regions and bless it with new power, sincerity, life and joy.

Here ends the sermon of the Bible and Religion. At starting I looked not for so long a road. But if it lead any one higher up in the Bible, that is much. If it lead to the Bible and natural religion together, far up the heights of the soul, that is much indeed.





## HAPPINESS FROM THOUGHTS.

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"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things"—Phil. iv, 8.

"Such as are thy habitual thoughts, such also will be the character of thy mind; for the soul is dyed by the thoughts."

"Constantly then give to thyself a retreat into thy mind, and renew thyself; and let thy principles be brief and fundamental, which, as soon as thou shalt recur to them, will be sufficient to cleanse the soul completely."—Marcus Aurelius, v. 16 and iv. 3.

In the text from the Apostolic letter to the Philippians we must emphasize the word "think." The Greek word means primarily to reason; hence to ponder, dwell on, take account of. The Apostle has been telling the believers in Philippi that they must not be given over to outward ceremonies but keep in themselves the simplicity of religious faith; and rest themselves, says he, on whatsoever is spiritual—truth, uprightness, justice, things pure, lovely, of good report, of virtue and praise. These things they are to take account of, to consider and to ponder them, to reason of them. The virtue of this lies in the power of these spiritual reflections to affect the soul, because as Aurelius says, the soul is dyed by the thoughts. And the lofty stoic puts this truth in the noble way, the entrancing way, saying not that the soul is dyed ill by bad and selfish thoughts (which is true, but yet were only a look at a deformity as to be avoided) but that the soul is cleansed completely by good and generous thoughts, "principles brief and fundamental"—which is a heavenly truth, and is a look at a heavenly beauty as to be adored and sought.

This, then, is my subject in this sermon, that the soul is dyed by the thoughts; and I look at the lovely and heavenly side of it, that the soul is brought to health, beauty and joy by good

and great thoughts; that high thoughts are "medicines for the soul."

It is in the feelings that we have happiness. Feeling is either pleasure or pain, joy or sorrow. But it is thoughts which produce the happiness. Thoughts lead forth the feelings, either to peace or to strife, to grief or to bliss. This truth I will speak of to you under some special points.

1. It is thoughts that keep feeling in its right direction and true relations. Otherwise it runs wild, either to ruin or to waste. For feeling is not regulative. It has no law in itself but to rush and run, to flow or ebb, like a torrent or tide. This is no more than to say that feeling is joy or sorrow, pain or delight, as happens. For only what leaps from the life or heart of us with no law or question of restraint, no reflection, no doubts or apprehensions, can be raptures or woes. If reflection, doubt, consideration, question, go before it, the joy halts meantime. It is when the argument, examination, discipline ends, and the gate is opened, and feeling is bidden to be gone its way freely into the garden, that joy begins. Therefore, as feeling has no law but to pour out, thoughts are needful to guide it. Principles, which have been chosen by reflection, mayhap by painful meditation, must guard the feeling, lest it waste itself for naught and unto loss, or lest it riot wantonly, or bewitch us, or grow wild and ungoverned. Feeling is an impetus, a motion; but 'tis thoughts that give the substance. Reflection breeds what then being moved becomes *emotion*, or movement outward and forth; and if it be substance which may rush forth freely, whose headway is good for us and for others, then the feeling is pure joy in its free course, like a brook whose clear material flashes the sun in its unforbidden flow.

Suppose one loves. 'Tis a matter and concern of *thoughts* whether the love in its rush and free course shall be joy or grief, good or evil. If one have reflected what love is and what it is to love, if he have good thoughts of love, high, beautiful and true ideals of it, and a wise understanding of its nature by thinking of it and by steadily looking at it in his mind, to know it,—it is plain that he will be directed well and guarded well in his love by thoughts. His love will be noble. Then he will have the pure joy of the current of the swift river of feel-

ing, because the freedom and the swift sweep forth are natural, clear and shining, from hills of thought.

Or if one feel hatred—shall it break forth, shall it rush freely? If first one think well what hatred is and what it will do if it be set free, his thoughts will have a care over the feeling and direct it away or change it, so that there occurs no forth-going of what, if loosed, would become a torrent of wreckage and woe.

Thus thoughts give happiness and are medicine of the soul by guarding and guiding the feelings whose motion and free course make joy or sorrow.

2. Thoughts make joy for us by their constancy. They never fail, nor flag, nor weary us. Emotions must rest. We can not endure them without intervals. They must sleep sometimes. They must pause, they are spent for the time. They must wait for a re-awaking, with refreshment. Feelings are to the soul like delicate fruits and foods to the body,—source of strength and of lovely temperate delights, yet possibly a surfeit too unless they be taken with pauses and rest. But thoughts are like the atmosphere which may be breathed every moment with life and exhilaration, and even in sleep is to be breathed. A thought never loses, nor faints, nor can be a surfeit. We may feed of it at any moment, We may recur to it, and it never needs to be rested. 'Tis always at its full. Therefore, when ecstasies, raptures must rest awhile, being spent for the time, thoughts fill with sweetness what else were a blank, a suspense or vacancy. Thoughts come, howsoever familiar, always new and fresh, and fill us with gentle gales of feelings so soft and ethereal, down-blowing from the hills of thought, enthusiasms for ideas and hopes for mankind so gentle and so wafting, that almost we know not the delicate feelings which make our gladness while the imperious and grand emotions are taking their rest. Thoughts, high, spiritual thoughts, make for us the happiness of knowing that we live, when else in a manner we were dead, the great emotions which circle about persons, causes, interests, nations, being laid awhile to necessary slumber.

3. Thoughts feed the feelings. They give fuel to feeling, and substance,—a grand kind of power and value. For feel-

ings not only must rest and sleep at times, but they can not feed on themselves nor one of them on another. 'Tis a law of feeling that it must feed on thoughts; else there is no food for it, and it withers, starving. But thoughts feed feeling with divine substance and bring it to grandeur, fervor and might. For feeling follows after things known to be great and glorious, pathetic and noble; but these are to be known only by thoughts which both make and manifest things glorious, pathetic and grand. Therefore by thoughts, as for example, a principle or a reason of virtue, an argument of justice, a conception of love, a knowledge of beauty in nature, in poetry, in discourse, a vision of what is generous or heroic or religious, a perception of order and law, an ideal of social life, or of national glory, or of human behavior,—by such thoughts feeling is aroused to great exercise and noble fervors.

Thoughts feed feeling, again, because it is thoughts which bring persons before our eyes and carry us near them and tie us to them. There is naught in the world which a man can embrace, dwell in and love, without thoughts, but himself. For it is thoughts that enshrine others for us—thoughts such as, What is a soul? How feels it? How is it moved, influenced, rejoiced, grieved, benefited, injured, instructed? What is our part and duty and power unto a friend's soul, or a stranger's? What is happiness? What are the means of happiness? What part or dignity or virtue of our life is it to be the joy of another's? What care, what invention, what regards are needful therein? What is tenderness? What "vigilant variety of tenderness" is necessary or valuable? 'Tis thoughts which answer such questions that sustain our love in voyages to other persons and in constancy and sojourn with them. Wherefore if a man be without such thoughts, if they move him not, if he delight not in them, soon he will shrink and shrivel in his feelings to the space of what he can love without thoughts, which is only himself, and he will become no more than a scrub in the mean hovel of himself.

Thoughts feed feelings, again, in all kinds of love, because companionship in thoughts is so blissful. It is very pure and very beautiful bliss. It is said sometimes that no loneliness is so sad or so deep as that of thoughts which engage us devoutly,

and yet are unshared, unspoken, or spoken to unsympathetic ears. If this be true, the converse is so, that glowing thoughts and fervors of thought shared between lovers of all kinds is a great bliss, and therefore by such partnership in thoughts, their union of heart is deepened, glorified and confirmed. They who share thoughts together, and rejoice in high thoughts, with enthusiasm for ideas and delight in the beauty of thoughts, are united in things which feed feeling. Therefore their love will be constancy and growth. And they take part together in things which give grandeur and elevation to feeling. Therefore their love will be noble. And all that makes love a constancy and a nobleness makes it living and strong in all its qualities. Therefore their love will be tender and very joyful. And when the great emotions must rest and sleep sometimes, as they must, then they who are united by thoughts and delights in the wonder, beauty and glory of Law and Presence in nature and in history, which are thoughts, exceeding lovely, heavenly and transporting thoughts, spiritual and like to God who is in them—they who are united in these joys of mind will have always a blest and earnest fellowship and fund of life together during the slumber-moments of the rapturous emotions. They who are bound together only by feelings will not want each other while those emotions are sleeping; but they who are tied together in devotion to high thoughts, will want each other always, because the joy of thoughts needs no slumber. I am persuaded that many friends and other lovers whose lives ought to be a constancy of good affection and of joy therein, tire of each other not by reason of fickle hearts, but by lack of thoughts. For common interests, the cares or triumphs of getting and keeping, sports, affectionate pleasures, are not enough to feed and nourish in us that great element of love, which, as say the Scriptures, is Divinity, for “God is Love.”

Here I must recur again to what herein before, and often at other times, I have said,—never too much said till we learn to draw all the happiness from it that can be,—that thoughts give joy by adding the powers of reason unto the powers of the affections. For love has its *laws*, and they who know not its laws will never come at its joys. But they who are devout unto thoughts, prizing and seeking thoughts, and knowing that



“thoughts are the medicine of the soul,” such thoughts as, What truly is love? What is the real nature of it? What are the kinds and degrees of it? What are the laws of it? What are the ideals of love? What are the essential reciprocities of love? What ought friends to expect of each other? What are the risks, and dangers of affection?—they who repair to these thoughts will know the nature of affection, and add the power of reason unto it, and *love thoughtfully*, which is successfully and joyfully. One thing seems plain, that if love be anything at all in human life, it is a very great thing, and worthy of being done grandly; and yet it is very difficult. Nay, I think it is the greatest human exercise, and the most difficult.

4 Thoughts lift us wholly and far out of *self*. “To *unloose* the spirit and *forget ourself* in thought,” is a good saying,—to set free the soul (for thought has no fetters) and inhabit the universe like God, who gives us that power in his image; and to forget ourself in what we adore, and fly like a bird, “paying the double tribute first to sing our part and then obey.” Many feelings, even the best, most lovely, pure and tender feelings, leave us self-conscious in some manner, because they are so fervent, so yearning, or have anxieties or wishes, or are sorrows, or private joys. Thoughts free us, lift us above self, far up; and thus thoughts are a means of bringing to pass Jesus’ saying that we lose our life to find it. For when we lose ourselves in a thought, we are entered in unto God. When a man no more is confused and sunk in himself, he dwells in God. We are exalted infinitely, made sublime, universalized in a thought.

Thought is a mystery. Thinking is a divine act, if to be able to know God hath divinity in it. For to think is to look straight at God. To reason of the facts of the earth and heavens and of the mind, and array them before us, is to look at God; and they that do this purely, that is, with a sincere heart to love true thoughts, “shall see God”—so saith the Master.

A wide thought, a great principle, an abstract conception, a law that exists in innumerable objects and kinds of objects, a pure idea whose beauty is in its severe truth or in its lustrous glory, with no relation to getting anything and no use in making anything, but just a sublime thought, an ethereal truth, a spiritual idea,—what majesty and power in such, to attract, sub-

due, bless us, and lift us to their image, to fill our countenance with their light, as Moses' face shone because he had looked on God! What sadness never to stand on those serene heights, to go up into that atmosphere, where thoughts are like light! What sad loss to love no great and pure ideas for themselves, thoughts for their own beauty or sublimity, but to call such love and exercise a "flourishing in the clouds;" to care for naught but what turns to some account in practice, in affairs or interests! What meanness never to be satisfied unless doing something, or getting something, bringing something to pass! Can we not rest us in the Presence of God by thoughts, and enjoy being alive and having knowledge? Are we not made for that spiritual greatness and that delight in thoughts whose beauty is in themselves? Is it not these participations with God which

"Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence?"

To rejoice in beautiful thoughts, though they manufacture naught, is to go unto God purely. But to care only to do something, to make something, to bring to pass "principalities and powers,"—this is to follow after God for the results of it; which is to seek the results, but not Him. Thoughts are our discoveries of God. If by thoughts we go into the company of God often, withdrawing our eyes from the things which are tossing and struggling that we may see Him in all things under all the war and strife, and turning our ears from the uproar that we may hear Him and know what he says above all the noise and even in the din itself, we shall find a very great happiness. Then we can work in the noise without being noisy, and in difficult labors with patience and joy. Thought for itself, for the thoughts, for sights of God—how vast is this, and how far away from doing something for some other end, from counting all thoughts, even holy visions, as but means or process or power to make or get something visible!

A true thought is a piece of eternity. It is as green, as blossoming and fruitful to-day as when first it was uttered ages ago. It uses men. It turns men to its service—not to make anything out of it, but only to preach it, to show that it stays and lives in the world, being a sight of God, and to teach men its

grace, beauty, adorableness. 'Tis the greatest and most glorious men whom a thought quickens to its service. The prophets came not to say new things. Where was ever a great prophet who had aught new to say, which had not been dreamed of before him? Not for this come prophets, but to say the old, eternal truths once again; and they follow each other through the ages to do that.

Ethereal, beautiful thoughts, which are like the stars that are for naught on earth but only to hang on high and fill the skies—these thoughts make happiness for us and are “medicines for the soul” because they are the substance of religion; such thoughts as, What the Great Name means; What our nature is; Whence we come; Whither we go; What life is, and the meaning of life; The place and power of character, in religion; What prayer is; Providence, inspiration, the voice within, the infinite Ought, the working of all things together for good, wonders and unspeakable spiritual guidances, intimations, fore-sights, perceptions, comprehensions within us, the mysterious effect of soul on soul, communications of spiritual life,—what these are; What immortal life means; What hope and faith are; What Infinity and Eternity are; What pain is; What divine love is—and justice; What joy and death are—and discipline, and moral penalty. These are thoughts which are “medicine for the soul,” which lift us into awe, quell our turmoil and selfishness, and bring us to a quiet height of life; and from the height we see “the wide quiet” of God. Thoughts withdraw us into their stillness, in which, alone, or with one or two, sought for love, or met by chance maybe, yet truly gathered in His name, we may listen to the silence, or speak so that “Silence is pleased.” By thoughts we make a quiet within us, and spread it about us; leave the noise, the hurry, the turmoil, the strain and struggle, and turn us to think of the glory and pure bliss of the eternal things that throng us; and when we do this with thoughts, the heart and soul will follow and we shall know what the love and peace of God are like, though they “pass all understanding.”

“All our dignity lies in our thoughts.” In what else indeed can dignity consist? Dignity is worthiness, and the worthiness of a thinking being is the elevation of his thoughts. Not in position, or power, not in things heaped up, in possessions,

in honors, offices, ornaments, gildings, tapestries, feats, or any other boasts—not in these lies any dignity; but all is in our thoughts. He who has large noble thoughts, spiritual and unmixed thoughts, which dwell in the upper chambers and towers of the mind, looking out of windows for the heavenly prospects, for the dome of heaven, the smile of earth—he has all the dignity which can exist; for all our worth is in our thoughts.

Will you tell me, thereupon, that to think is little unless action follows, and that he is but a poor fellow whose thoughts come not forth in deeds? I answer you that to act nobly and to build thoughts into power and expressions is indeed needful, but that he who cares for no thoughts except such as can become actions or be made into some visible form, will do no grand deeds, nor be noble in small ones.

The cares of life exact of us, 'tis true. Neither despise I them. They have their place in Nature. We are faithful to them when we give them their place; but 'tis well to give them no more than their place. And what their rightful place is, this is one of the thoughts we should meditate. I would not go into a cell to meditate, nor retire with contempt from the world. That was the old way, men thinking that to know heaven they must abhor earth. 'Tis a method not only poor but easy. The task is to *live* with men, not shun them. Wordsworth says,

“ 'Tis by comparison an easy task,  
Earth to despise; but to converse with Heaven,  
This is not easy.”

The depth and meaning of pleasure is to be sounded as well as of soberness and sorrow. We have not to despise the earth, or things earthly, but to understand them; which is to see them in their place.

To think is life. Thoughts are the very breathings of life. To think spiritually, etherially, is to live deeply. 'Tis in thoughts that lies the persistence of life, the passion of “personal continuance.” Even pain can not destroy this in souls sane and generous. “Sad cure, to be no more,” cries the fallen angel in Milton,

“For who would lose,  
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
Those thoughts that wander through eternity.”

I will offer you some examples of lofty and delicate, etherial thoughts, and I will take them all from Marcus Aurelius, whose words truly are Scripture, and have been light and peace to me, reading them over and over; and ever when I recur to them they seem as full of life as at first, For however I may try to live in them, I fall away and forget how great they are, till returning to them, I refresh myself again in "astonishment and power" and exaltation. In the words which I have taken as a text from him he says that "the soul is dyed by the thoughts." Therefore, continues he, "dye it with a continuous series of such thoughts as these; for instance, that where man can live, there he can also live well." "I, who have seen the nature of the good that it is beautiful and of the bad that it is ugly, can not be injured by any one; for no one can fix on me what is ugly." This is a constant and beloved thought of Aurelius, which continually he is enforcing, that if a man be injured he injures himself, for no one can injure him. He says, "Always bear in mind what is the nature of the whole, and what is thy nature, and how this is related to that, and what kind of a part it is of what kind of a whole; and that there is no one who hinders thee from always doing and saying the things which are according to the nature of which thou art a part." "If thou keep thy divine part pure, as if thou shouldst be bound to give it back immediately, if thou hold to this, expecting nothing, fearing nothing, but satisfied with thy present activity, according to nature, and with heroic truth in every word and sound which thou utterest, thou wilt live happy. And there is no man who is able to prevent this." "Let me rest me in these two principles; the one, that nothing will happen to me which is not conformable to the nature of the universe; the other, that it is in my power never to act contrary to God and the voice within me; for there is no man that can compel me to do this." "Whatever is proper to the spirit no one can impede; for neither fire, nor iron, nor tyrant, nor abuse, touches it in any way." "Let it not be in any man's power to say *truly* of thee that thou art not good; but let him be a liar whoever shall think anything of this kind about thee; and this is altogether in thy power. For who is he that shall hinder thee from being good and simple?"

Full of high and pure religious thoughts and beautiful life-



lore is this sage, as follows: "Neither wilt thou do anything well which pertains to man without at the same time having a reference to things divine; nor the contrary." "See how few the things are the which if a man lay hold of, he is able to live a life which flows in quiet and is like the existence of God." "Reverence that which is best in the universe; and this is that which makes use of all things. And in like manner also reverence that which best in thyself; and this is of the same kind as that." "When thou wishest to delight thyself, think of the virtues of those who live with thee." "Understand that every man is worth just so much as the things are worth about which he busies himself." "All things are implicated with one another, and the bond is holy; and there is hardly anything unconnected with any other thing." "Let the wrong which is done by a man stay there where the wrong was done." "If thou shalt be afraid not because sometime thou must cease to live, but if thou shalt fear never to have begun to live according to nature, then thou wilt be a man worthy of the universe which has produced thee, and thou wilt cease to be a stranger in thy native land." "What remains except to enjoy life by joining one good thing to another so as not to leave even the smallest interval between."

It is thrilling joy to find ourselves at the center of some grand, wide view of life. To partake of a large and general thought is as if we had climbed a hill and looked out over an immense surface of the earth filled with a great variety of objects assembled by sweep of vision into one resplendent picture. Such ecstasy as that view is to the eye, is a noble generalization to the mind. Thoughts always are a rise from the concrete to the general, and lead us to this thrill of reception. I know not well how to bring this truth before you, since you are not used to the language of the schools, but I will try thus:—When we are busy in the crafts and cares of life, immersed in the whirl and the din of the day, we are occupied with particular duties or interests. This particular thing must be done, that enterprise must be planned, this sickness attended, that purchase made, this business arranged, that journey provided. 'Tis always with details and with individual things that we must be busy. But when we retire from tumult, withdrawing from the particular

thing that busies us, and begin to think of the nature and meanings of all the things together, and of the life that animates all of them, then we rise to a high place. We leave the particular and ascend to the universal. The individual things among which we were plodding on the ground, we now assemble. We look at them as a whole from a high, quiet place. We discern a likeness running through many things. We make groups of things by the resemblances or common ideas in them. Again, we see common thoughts running through many of the groups; by which we make groups of groups. Thus moves the mind, till we arrive at a grand conception which encircles a multitude of groups, all displaying common traits or thoughts which bring them together in one whole. The mind embraces them in this one beatific comprehension, seeing with joy the one thought in the many things. These common thoughts or likenesses in countless things gathering them into one conception, are thoughts of the Eternal One. They are communicated to us by this process of generalization, by which we come near to God through group after group, till we arrive where one thought throws its circle around all. The thoughts of the Eternal Mind are communicated, we being made like Him. We can not tell the nature of the intervention. We know not what matter is. But we see therein the thoughts of God. This is unity, fervor, life,—community with Him. This is what Emerson meant when he said, “Generalization is always a new influx of divinity into the mind, and hence the thrill that attends it.” When we draw away from cares, fears, pleasures, labors, and are still awhile, turning the mind to the source of life and of thought, then grows an encircling meditation,—idea, hope, faith,—which gathers together a multitude of petty or painful facts till they are sky-embosomed and glow with one light. We behold all things assembled in their places. The molecules of a body, obedient to the subtle law of it, fall into their places in mathematical angles and planes; then shoots the exquisite crystal. So do all the things of creation, under the thoughts in them, assemble in their places, and make then the countenance of God.

With these thoughts, we are at home anywhere. The world, the stars, are home. We may be solitary, as if alone in some wide chamber of that wide home; but we can not be lonely,

as if in a foreign place. And we can be worthy of the solitude. If we examine what in solitude we think and feel, we shall know much about our spiritual health. For when one is solitary, having naught but himself, what has he unless he can be uplifted by calmness, quiet and thoughts, till he can entertain nature, and God will visit him. We all must be alone sometimes; and one may be left quiet alone, sitting

"On stormy waters in a little boat  
That holds but him and can contain no more."

Then must the mind feed on its own store. But there is no lack if the store be Life, Nature, Providence, high Thoughts, assembled by hours withdrawn from noise and tumult when we ask questions of our souls. There is also a deep within us where we must be solitary, save for Infinite companionship. Who of us can reveal himself utterly to the dearest friend? Who can express in words what goes on within him in that depth where only One can touch and know him? There where life rises where love streams forth from the abyss, we must be alone in this universe, save for the presence of God. If we know not that he is there, we are forsaken. But by thoughts,—for thoughts are sights of God,—we know that we are not left alone. We behold ourselves reported everywhere, and all the whole converging to us. A sense of oneness therewith, of belonging thereto, grows up in us, which is the company of the Infinite.

Thoughts are like human friends—to make a new one is rapture, like the finding suddenly an angel come to us; to keep the old is life's quiet joy, hallowed love, spiritual comfort. A *new* thought, a fresh apprehension, is a rapture; and the higher, purer, more spiritual and unmingled the thought is, the greater is the rapture. And no wonder it is so; for if, as reverently I have said, thoughts are very sights of God, a new thought is the sudden beholding of another beauty and glory of God. Now also the value, friendliness, comfort and joy of an *old* thought is very great; and the greater by as much as the thought is high, spiritual, etherial and loved for itself, with naught to be made of it but to live in its light. And no wonder it is so; for these thoughts long known are sights of God which time and

use have hallowed into experience, communion and, if so I may speak, a daily stay of friendliness with Him. A friend has brought to me these following words from John Ruskin, "Make yourself nests of pleasant thoughts. None of us yet know, for none of us have been taught in early youth, what fairy palaces we may build of beautiful thoughts, proof against all adversity,—bright fancies, satisfied memories, noble histories, faithful sayings, treasure-houses of precious and restful thoughts, which care can not disturb, nor pain make gloomy, nor poverty take away from us—houses built without hands for our souls to live in."

Yes; and to do all acts of life in, even the last act of life. Thoughts which are a quiet daily stay of friendliness with God (I repeat the expression because I find my soul dwell in it with a fear which is not a being afraid, but rather the form of a sufficiency of joy)—these go with us to the end of this portion of life. They are the pillow for our mortal head, being our knowledge of things immortal. They lay us softly and unafraid to sleep, being our familiarity with things spiritual and eternal. Aurelius says it is safe to die if God be living, and it were sad to live if he be not; and again, "Be not affected, whether thou art cold or warm, if thou be doing thy duty; and whether thou art sleepy or well-awakened and rested; and whether ill-spoken of or praised, and whether dying or doing something else. For it is one of the acts of life, this act by which we die. It is sufficient then in this act also to do well what we have in hand."

I have spoken of thoughts as a great joy unto us and as "medicine of the soul," *if truly we live in them and breathe them in our souls*, as the body does the atmosphere. We must beware lest we speak thoughts without knowing them, and avow them while the soul sounds no deeps in them. For it is possible to move among thoughts, and even to utter them, as a fish swims in the seas, not knowing what the waters are, nor the skies over them, nor the earth under them. Wherefore continually we acknowledge, speak and sing thoughts which, if only deeply we would know them and have their light, would make our lives all one joy, one beautiful freedom and health. Why is it not so? Because we look on thoughts, but see them not; we avow them, but not devoutly take them.

Thus we sing in a hymn,—

“Be ours the steady will  
To work in silent faith our part,—  
For God is working still.”

If truly we knew that thought in our very souls, and breathed it within us, and said daily, *knowing* it, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” could we faint any more? Could we despair? Could we falter and sicken because of hopes deferred and the long patience of God? Should not we toil cheerily, knowing that we have but to do *our part*, for it is sure that God doeth his part?

Again we sing in a hymn,

“Let the lowliest task be mine,  
Grateful, so the work be thine.”

If this pure thought we knew truly, and in our souls it lived and breathed verily, where were our poor ambitions? Whither were flown our discontents? Where were our complainings under lowly duties and hidden domestic services? Should we moan any more to shine, to get glory, to pluck fame? Should not we be very simple and devout? Should we not be saying, “Come little deed, come little care, come hither and I will take thee, little duty. Are ye mine to do, to take, to wear on my breast? Yea, for first and now, ye are God’s—his work to be done by me. Ye are golden, ye are jewels. I will be arrayed in you, for His eyes who gave you; for he giveth naught but what is precious to him.”

Again we sing in a hymn,—

“Heir of all the ages, I,  
Heir of all that they have wrought,”

every golden deed, their labors and prayers, their passion, tears, faith sublime, every hope, all aspirations,

“Strength to do and to endure;  
Heir of all the ages, I,  
Lo! I am no longer poor.”

Is that truth? Is it no more than a singers sentiment? Is it not a seer’s verity? If truly that thought were vital breath in us, where were our poverty, our cries, or moilings to get more and use less? Were not banished our little prides, shows,



complacencies and shames? Where were our rich wishes and our mean sense of being always in want? Should we not walk like kings? What had we to do with tables, feasts, hangings, soft couches and fine robes? We should eat our daily food, were it as simple as earth's grains, with a very rich joy, because of our heritage of such riches of humanity of all the ages. We should be crying, "Have I not thoughts? All that men have done and prayed and loved—is it not mine? Is aught lost? Hath it not come down to me? Lord, I am very high—I am very full—I am very rich. Never was I poor. Now no longer *feel* I poor, but know my riches!"

## PERHAPS\*

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"Perhaps" is a word of much virtue, if we will consider it. A good text may be found in many a simple word of common speech. A volume of philosophy may be wrapped in one word. Words come of human experience, and sometimes they condense mighty experience into one expressive sound. It might take a trooping array and army of words levied in a huge book to unfold all the logic, science, poetry, romance, emotion of some human encounters and experience which have bred one word for themselves as perfect as a pearl in all lights. "Much virtue in "If," says Touchstone. I know an eminent preacher who once took for his text that one word, "If." And it was a text like a jewel, a great brilliancy in a small space. A very world of philosophy, and of human life which breeds the sage's wisdom, is enfolded in "If."

"Perhaps" is a word like to "If," and the bone of a big limb of human life. As one may handle a flower, or recite a verse often and over, before suddenly he sees, delighted, the colors, shapes and involutions of it, in like manner one day suddenly I perceived the virtue and good piety of "Perhaps" which I had been tossing on my tongue my life long.

One element or essence in the virtue of "Perhaps," as of "If," is doubt, uncertainty, hesitation, sense of limitation. If a man say "Perhaps," it means,—“I have a horizon. I can not get me to any place where I shall be free from that circle. However I look, to whatever point, I can see only so far as that ring of bright sky. I am limited, fallible. Neither can I do

\*If the reader think, mayhap, that there is more of personal experience in this discourse than is seemly, will he remember and consider that it was given in the privacy of my own pulpit to my own people, who are like a simple and united family in their Religious Home; and that I let it appear, not all willingly, under the shelter of their request to have it as I spoke it.

what I will, nor see as far as I would." In such phrases, if we translate it, "Perhaps" discourses to us of our limitations. Shall I live another year? Perhaps. Shall I live this day out? Perhaps. Shall I carry this enterprise or that business to a conclusion? Perhaps. And *if* so I do, will it be quite well or happy for me? Perhaps. Will I keep to my resolution, my engagement with myself, my undertaking with another? Perhaps. Shall I keep my health, my limbs, my senses? Perhaps. Shall I keep my faith, my hope, trust, simplicity, love? Perhaps. "There is no man who can prevent this," says Aurelius. True. Yet I know one man who may deceive me; I mean myself. Shall I myself mislead myself? Perhaps.

It is plain that if we be limited so strictly, and neither can do always as our will dares, nor can see as our eye longs to see, if always we must say, "Perhaps I will do this," or, "Perhaps I shall see truly, and understand the matter as really it is," we ought to be brought to deliberation in our actions. And indeed very often we *must* come to it, whether we will or not; as a man must limp if he be lame, or grope in the dark. Deliberation in action or judgment, a pausing, waiting, looking about us, is *a taking advantage of the possibilities of things*. Now the possible varieties of events, the chances of different facts or explanations in anything which concerns us, are infinite. Therefore it is wisdom and goodness to give these innumerable possibilities time to unfold. For we know not how much we may learn or how much be aided. "All things work together for good to them that love God," says Paul. Yes; but not to them that love their own self-will; nor to them that are too much in haste for waiting till all the things *work together*. For the apostle says not that if we fly to them and plunge in them as they are at any moment, they will surely be good for us; but they *work together* for good, if they be allowed *to work*. Another text must be taken with the saying of Paul, this, that in His sight a thousand years are but as a day, yea, no more than yesterday when it is passed. Therefore, although all things work together for good to us, if they do so in a thousand years, it is not too much for divine patience, nor should be for human piety.

Therefore, as I have said, we ought to stand still very often and be not in haste; yes, stand very still, and take a long

steady look at whatever things are concerning themselves with us. And this is not merely worldly wisdom and prudence, but a veritable piety. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." By waiting we give all the possibilities free scope, to work together for us, and to bring to us the true freight which is stored in them. This is the same as to leave our door open for the visit and Providence of God. But if we hurry to much, and leave not the possibilities to work together for truth and for good, but seize one of them in our haste and apply our will to it and deal with it self-sufficiently and over-boldly, we are putting ourselves in the place of the Power and the Presence of God.

Therefore, pause we, wait we, saying quietly and religiously, "Perhaps."

To take an example: A man is offended by anything, say, a fault (so plainly it *seems* a fault) of friend, child or servant. The ill-seeming deed is suddenly made known to him. He is offended; anger rises; suspicions, punishments, retaliations, plots, leap to mind. In such a state of his mind, "Perhaps" will save him. He can say, and if wise, nay, if his religion be a daily piety which will stand him in stead, he *will* say, "Perhaps the ill-looking thing happened thus or thus; or perhaps again in this manner; or this other point may be the explanation, or perhaps there were things not visible on the surface at all, but lying deep, which will slowly rise to view." Thus if the grieved or angry man will stand still and look about him, to the four quarters of the heavens, that he may be ready for advantage from the possibilities lying in them, which may arise like pleasant gales,—if he will say to the West, "I salute you with 'Perhaps;' there is no saying what sleep may do;" and to the East, "Perhaps; who can tell what may come to light in the morning crimson?" and to the North, "Perhaps; surely these things will settle toward some pole star in the heavens;" and to the South, "I greet you with 'Perhaps;' there is no telling what fruits the possibilities may bring,"—If so the grieved man will do and say and look about, he will give "all things" a clear room in which to "work together for good" to him. He opens himself to Providence. Out of all the tangle of "Perhaps," he will see presently the right way appear, and the truth will beckon him.

Delay may be indolence; in which case the possibilities pass by us. But if it be a faithful waiting, it is what gives the universe a chance to do the work for us, or first to hew the outline and put it in our hands to finish. There is a common saying, "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," which I think is little better than a whip for drones and sluggards. If it read, "Never put off till to-morrow what you *ought* to do to-day," that were well. But that is close akin to another reading, "Never do to-day what you can put off till to-morrow." This is the reading which to the idling and lazy is a "stumbling block," but to the wise and firm is wisdom. For no man righteously can put off to another sun what he *ought* to do under this one. But no man wisely, nay, nor even piously, can crowd or pack this day with all he can force into it. For this is to deny Providence, who belike will show us on the morrow that many things were needless, and no more than soul-grinding cares, which we could have spared ourselves if we had bethought us piously of "Perhaps." We ought to say, "Can this care, this fear, this act, be dropped to-day? Then let us drop it, and be still, and open our hearts to the sky that its influence be rained on us. Perhaps by to-morrow the care or fear or act will be lifted away, either done for us, or needing not to be done, by that meeting or council of events in which they 'work together for good' to us." Thus "Perhaps" is a word of freedom for us, that the heart be not stuffed with business, nor dripping with toils, nor fevered with schemes, but have seasons of subsidence under the heavens, whereby to reflect the heavens and be enlightened.

"Perhaps" means *by haps*, by *happenings*. It is of the same force with *peradventure* and *perchance*, meaning *through or by what may occur or befall*. Thus "Perhaps" is a word having in it a certain assertion or doctrine of Providence, which some persons call Special Providence. I care not here to enter into argument or discussion of Special Providence; nor do I see, indeed, why Providence ever should be called Special, since all is involved in the one word Providence. What I care I what be the *means* of Providence, or that my ignorance and poor eyes can not trace out the lines of power of the action and care of God? 'Tis naught to me that I know not, nor can discover, how the influ-



ence or thought which holds the planets, seasons, days, in their orbits, connects these vast cycles with the egg of an insect, the flying of a bird, the business of a man, the love or sport or fright of a child. What is plain to me is that there were no law, no love, and no Providence in the whole if not in the parts of the whole, nor in the parts unless in them it were the same in all manner and essence with the all-mightiness and the all-reasonableness and the all-steadiness in the whole, "in which is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," When we say "Perhaps," we rest on this Providence. "Shall I bring this dear object to a conclusion?"—we cry. "So very dear it is—shall I bring it to pass? Shall I obtain so great joy or benefit?" If we answer quietly and religiously, "Perhaps," we say *By happenings* it may be so; by what befalls, by the events of God, by what comes out of the working of all things together, '*per haps*,' it may come to me." Now this means we must hold the haps in reverence, and be willing to be guided. If we strive to force everything, always to counsel with our own will and wish, not listening for a divine command, or "disobedient to the heavenly vision," we are not saying "Perhaps," but "By my will and pushing it shall be so." But if to some wish and plan, we say religiously, "Perhaps," we are attending to what God will utter in events. I say not that strong will is not noble and needful. 'Tis indeed very noble, needful, manly. I say not that a great purpose ought not to be spread before us and be kept in view daily like a polar star of life. This is often a grandeur in character. But I say that these qualities are not safe, but run danger of self-will, obstinacy, self-sufficiency, pride arrogance, unless they be balanced and well enlightened and humbled religiously with an obedient, listening, following spirit, worshipfully saying, "Perhaps." Emerson says, "The central fact is the superhuman intelligence pouring into us from its unknown source, to be received with religious awe and defended from any admixture of our will. \* \* \* It is fatal to spiritual health to lose your admiration. 'Let others wrangle,' said St. Augustine, 'I will wonder.'" But when we bring ourselves to events with our plans, quietly saying, "Perhaps," we are standing in admiration and reverence of the haps of God, the "chain of things" which "the next unto the farthest brings," and we

shall be simple and obedient, by reason of awe, wonder, worship and faith. We must be willing to be guided and to keep our minds open for guidance like windows for fresh air. There is a guidance, a wonderful and holy spiritual fact, a communication within us, which is contrary to too much planning, or to being obstinate in our plans, or to trying to reason out all things and pushing things to result, and hurrying onward. There is no safety for us but often to wait and listen for the inward guidance and to be able to hear it, and obey when it speaks in us.

This guidance within us, which is like a faculty of vision, appeals not to the understanding. It is not *contrary* to the understanding, for naught that is of God can deny reason. But the guidance by a marvelous perceiving power in us, aims not to be justified by the understanding, any more than sight or hearing does. It is simply a command uttered in the instinctive or spiritual higher reason, "Choose my way, not thine," united with direct power to see His way, by waiting for the inner eyesight to adjust itself and perceive. This faculty, or this divine communication, by whatever name you will call it, is like to our eyes in its action. If the eye be removed from one light to another, whether much dimmer or much brighter, it can not see well at once, but must wait till it widen or shrink according to the light, and must look quietly and long at the objects about it before, in that new light, it can see them truly as they are. So when the mind comes to a council of many new things, and it has to judge of them and choose what is to be done among them, or how we are to act in the conditions, it has not the power of beholding instantly, nay, not for a long time it may be, but must look quietly and steadily at the concourse of things with a long and pious patience; and in time we shall see, if only we have such piety and patience that *we will not act before we know that we see*. This is not a feat of conscious argument, reflection, statement. The elements of great questions in life, great changes, movements, decisions, are so many and so vast in their complexity, their ramifyings and combinations, that no process of understanding can unravel them and predict what issues shall come. Yet, if long enough you wait, and be never wearied out, nor driven by threats of men, nor enticed by entreaties of friends, nor broken by reproaches, nor overcome by ridicule, but

stand firm, waiting with piety, saying, "As surely as God is my guide, I will not move till I see the way like a path of light before me," then at last you *will* see it. Though you can not argue it nor troop up reasons to maintain you, you will see the right act to be done, and you will *know* it. Neither "can fire melt it out of you," nor will the event ever put to shame that light within you, that divine communication, if you have waited with piety to the end of the probation. As a fog lifts from the sea, and unto all the vessels lying-to in the mist opens a broad water-way, and safe paths around each other, so lifts all doubt from your mind, and your course is clear, your way is wide. However long you shall have waited, and by what degrees soever the communication or knowledge hath been writing itself within you, *the assurance will be sudden at last*. You will lie down some day to find your patient obscurity as thick as ever it was; you will awake in the morning, and lo! your decision is a part of the daylight, so plain and pure it lies before you. It is this wisdom and piety which is in the common maxim, "When you know not what to do, do nothing." For this is but to say,—When you have some momentous choice to make, and all that now you can say is, "Perhaps,"—perhaps this course will turn out so, so, or so, or this other course perhaps will end so,—then you must wait and be still, till the haps of God shall have "worked together" for you, and no longer you say, "Peradventure this," or, "Perchance that," but, "I see! I know! Forward my feet! The path is light!"

In these words I am not speculating or imagining, but transcribing my experience. For in grave questions and turning-points in my life it has been my experience that never I could reason. I could not gather the elements so as to compare them and infer from them, They were too many, too far remote, the possibilities too tangled, the conditions too complex. I could not pierce the future by aught that lay at hand in the present. It would have been easy to wait alone; but if I waited, others must wait. "Will you do this?" said they. "Perhaps." "If not this, then will you do that?" "Perhaps. "But will you decide nothing?" No, because I see nothing; I can only say 'Perhaps.' I must wait for the haps." So I have waited many weeks. One day at last suddenly I knew as plainly what to do

as I knew my own life. Never, when thus I have waited have I regretted afterward the decision to which I came, nor the act I did—never so much as once. I have regretted many things in my life, and suffered by many things; but they have been the acts in which I took matters into my own hands impatiently, and to bend things to my will, neglecting the divine intimations which commanded me to wait.

Very often it has happened to me to be commanded imperiously in choice of sermons. When I go to a strange pulpit for a Sunday, how shall I choose? The best, you will say—the best I have? But which is the best? That which best fits the place. But how judge of that?—for I am ignorant of the people. There is no way but to wait till I am led and told. But here the leading comes quickly, and always it comes as quickly as needful, never too late. Many times I have read over and over my list of written discourses, knowing no reason, unless some vanity, for choosing one more than another. Soon I am stopped at some one sermon, and the Command is sudden and plain, “Take this.” If I obey, I have a peace which is like an anchorage. But that Command takes no thought of human vanities and ignorance. Sometimes I have not liked the choice and have wrestled with the Command, even impiously making my own choice that I might take something which I judged finer, and going to the very door to preach my sermon against the Command; when sometimes the Command has grown so great and stern that I have gone back and laid aside the discourse which wilfully I had taken, for the one which the Command had assigned me. Never did I disobey without failure; never did I obey without a happy result. Once (I remember it well—I never can forget it) I carried two sermons with me to the pulpit. It was at evening. I had given a practical ethical sermon in the morning. In the evening I wished to take a different kind. It was my desire to shine that night and to show what I could do in thought and in fine expression. I had great reason, sad and strong reason, for wishing to recommend myself brilliantly on that night. I had looked over my sermons and chosen as strong and impressive a discourse of thought as I could find, and even had chosen the hymns for it, when suddenly to my dismay, the Command came to me to take the sim-

plest and most common moral sermon of them all—so I thought it. I was not willing to obey. What! sacrifice myself by giving that piece of commonplace? Unreasonable! But the Command? I passed all the long afternoon battling for my own way. At evening, still battling, I carried both sermons to the pulpit. Until a minute before I arose to preach I still was battling. Then while were sounding the strains of the last hymn, the Command, above the music, and yet as if of it, seemed to become a voice, and yet also a light like a writing, and the church was filled with it, saying, “My way, not thine.” I dared refuse no longer. I gave the poor simple discourse of some common points in conduct. Was the result good? Did the issue justify that relentless Command?—you ask. I know not, by any outward measure. An aged man came to me afterward saying he would that a thousand persons could have heard the words which I thought so common, so thin and simple. And the congregation listened as if under a spell, as if the Lord, having subdued me, himself did take the people’s ear, to give them to hear my submission to his Command. Any farther I could not follow results. But the best proof was my own ease and assurance, my peace and conviction of heart. All the strife vanished, all the unwillingness fled the instant I became obedient. The very air seemed a mingled light and peace. I was very happy in the pulpit that night.

It is a point of “Perhaps” that it invests us with the dignity of suspense. It involves the poise of character needed to rest quiet in an uncertainty. Not only must we deliberate, but often it must be a long waiting while we hang, as it were, in mid-sky, painfully, with no support for our feet. “Perhaps” signifies our ignorance, as I have said,—our veiled eyes, our poor limits of anticipation, the future all invisible to us. Often the questions which the future locks from us, are very great crises of heart or mind or affairs, wringing us, however we try, with anxieties or fears or trembling interests. All these we utter with the word “Perhaps.” Speak we the word then with a stout heart, a steady poise? Are we able to meet that suspense and bear it, soldier-like, on the march? I know not whether there be a greater test of inward power than a prolonged uncertainty. Most persons must rush weakly to a solution.



They must be propped by some opinion. They will be glad to have the truth if *now* they can, on the instant. But they can not wait for assurance of truth. They must have the support, or crutch, as then it is, of some declaration on the moment, some opinion which they may lean on. "Perhaps" tries the grain of character. If the character endure the test and come forth strong to wait, slow to take up declarations, opinions, clamorous views, cries of parties or of interests, but steadily waiting and looking and brooding for the truth, till light dawn, till the very and true morning come, however long the night be—then there is great reward given to the spirit. "Perhaps" grows to a victor's wreath at last. Great power, virtue, faith, a noble poise of character, a lofty steadiness, come of the discipline of "Perhaps." And when the event comes at last, when the explanation occurs, the solution is given, the truth hath come, then how strong and glorious are all the conditions, because all has been endured by us and naught hurried or forced anywhere; but what has arrived has come in "the fullness of time." When all things are ready, having been "working together" unto that result, now they work mightily for joy in the result. When "Perhaps" has had its full scope and all now is *ready*, then all the circumstances conspire for beauty and bloom. Nature takes up and cherishes what belongs to her, because the season of it hath come in the long cycle of the earth's path in Providence.

"Perhaps" has an element of lovely wonder in it. It embraces the future not only as the unknown but as the deep of all the possible and the glorious. *Perhaps* this or that great thing will take place hereafter. Small difference how far off the space or time. It is present now to the mind's ecstasy in "Perhaps." The infinite power and riches of God seem to lie in a holy "Perhaps." Perhaps we shall have a vast knowledge sometime. Perhaps we shall take splendid voyages on great seas, and magnificent journeys through forests, plains, mountains, gardens, cities. Perhaps we shall ride to the stars and voyage round the solar system. Perhaps we shall meet Socrates, Confucius, Paul, Huss, the Nazarene, sometime. Perhaps, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Aeschylus, Newton, Kepler, will be accessible to us.

Wonder, triumph, admiration, vast expectation, are essential to spiritual health, to a robust fine health. Now, noble expectation grows from love of the common. Those souls who retain the faculty of childhood to be pleased with little things, are the spirits most delicate and sensitive to impressions of the good, beautiful and true. They are charming characters, full at once of wisdom and simplicity; and they enjoy deeply. Often I note with pleasure persons who linger habitually to gaze into the wide museum of the shop windows, when plainly it is with admiration or wonder, not covetousness or envy. I had a friend like to a father and brother in one, who so was pleased with little things that it was one continuous pleasure to note his pleasure. How he would delight in some small mechanical ingenuity, turning the article round and round in his hands, spending many minutes wrapt in admiration of some common utensil—moments, no doubt, of unalloyed felicity. Emerson mentions as an attribute or mental quality of a poet his “sharp objective eyes.” This he says, while speaking of Plutarch, “The range of life makes the glad writer,” he says, “The reason of Plutarch’s vast popularity is his humanity. A man of society, of affairs, upright, practical, a good son, husband, father and friend,—he has a taste for common life, and knows the court the camp, and the judgment hall, but also the forge, farm, kitchen and cellar, and every utensil and use, and with a wise man’s or a poet’s eye. Thought defends him from any degradation. He does not lose his way, for the attractions are from within, not from without. A poet in verse or prose must have a sensuous eye, but an intelligent coperception.” “Perhaps” has in it all this fine love of the common, as the basis of a worshipful wonder, and that again spired with a boundless expectancy which is joy and splendor—like Paul’s ecstatic cry, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be,” and “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things” which God hath in keeping.

“Perhaps” has an element of moral power in it. There may be glad haps and grievous haps. We can not see the near future. What has it for us on our way? Perhaps joy, perhaps sorrow; perhaps successes, honors influence; perhaps losses, failures, obscurity, loneliness. How shall we meet this

“Perhaps” in outward life? By being armed against fortune in our inward life. By being soldierly in spirit, as under marching orders of the Lord to go through this continent of life, and, ready for all haps, to endure what thirst, hunger, cold, weariness, wounds there may be, “for the prize of our high calling,” for the great service we are in; meantime refreshed with all new sights, lovely scenes, wide prospects on the march, sticking a wayside flower in our caps, and feeding on the earth’s wild fruits or tilled grains lustily. To this high quality of spirit we are helped much by rejoicing in little things, with fine wonder and love, which then fly like young eagles off to an eyrie of expectancy. For small beauties and little charms can not fail us anywhere, in the poorest conditions. If we delight in these, moreover, and drink all their nectar, we shall not stake our joy on building up great things, which, because they are high, any quake of fortune will overthrow. Plutarch says, “When Nero had made an octagonal tent, a wonderful spectacle for cost and beauty, Seneca said to him, ‘You have made yourself a poor man; for if you chance to lose this, you can not tell where to get such another.’” “Perhaps,” making us think of the shifting winds, waters and sands of fortune, teaches us that the true and noble wealth of mind and hand, is, not to depend on keeping what we have acquired (which with all our watching peradventure we can not do), but to have command in our own souls and in the world to continue to do what most we value of what we have done.

Meantime, there is ONE with whom is no “Perhaps.” All our deliberation, our piety of waiting, our wonder and worship, our hope, expectation, fortitude, uttered in “Perhaps,” rest on ONE, Infinite, Eternal, with whom is no “Perhaps,” “no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Yes, they *rest* on Him. It is *rest*, peace, stay, strength. Not only they obtain and exist by Him, but *rest*. If we be ignorant, there is Knowledge. If in our short range of vision, we must deliberate and move slowly, there is Patience which also is Infinite Power to bring truth to pass. If we must wait with piety, which is faith, there is Eternal Faithfulness which justifies us, bringing light and assurance at last. If we must arm us with fortitude to meet strife or pain, there is Infinite Holy Presence and

Love which maketh joy more joyful than pain is painful, and showeth us the divinity of loving and of thinking. Whatever be our "Perhaps," this is rest. Nay, unless we love our fortunes more than excellence and beauty, what matter for haps! and how steady may we be among them! since goodness and truth stand fast—in Him.

"It fortifies my soul to know  
That, though I perish, Truth is so;  
That howsoever I stray or range,  
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.  
I steadier step when I recall  
That, if I slip, Thou dost not fall."





## APPENDIX

### OF AFTER-THOUGHTS AND READINGS.

Page 24. The following are cogent words in Newman's "Apologia." Speaking of "Evangelical Religion or Puritanism," the common Protestantism of the sects, Newman says, "We have no dread of it at all. We only fear what it may lead to. It does not stand on intrenched ground, or make any pretence to a position; it does but occupy the space between contending powers, Catholic truth and Rationalism. Then indeed will be the stern encounter, when two real and living principles, simple, entire and consistent, one in the church, the other out of it, at length rush upon each other, contending not for names and words, or half-views, but for elementary notions and distinctive moral characters." It will be noted herein that Newman treats all the common Protestant sects as unimportant because they do no more than occupy for the present a certain space between the *real* contending powers, pure Rationalism and Catholic authority. This is the simple truth; at least, I see it so. Accordingly I let all the names go and am not busy with any of them, not even with the name Christian, which is the name by which it is sought to make a solid army of all the names. I know only simple natural religion, that is, the devotion and thoughts which grow by nature in and with the reason, as against supernatural religion, that is, the system which is enveloped with church authority and alleged miraculous sanctions.

Page 25. The following will show how a reasoning Roman Catholic deals with reason. In a lecture before an audience of all denominations, in St. Louis, Mo., the Catholic Bishop Ryan said: "Catholics do not believe that they are bound to submit their intellect to the decision of a human institution. They

have first convinced themselves that the Church to which they pay allegiance, and by which they are taught the truths of revelation, is a divine institution, and that it is an unerring messenger from God to them; therefore if they submit to a decision of the Church, they submit to a decision of a tribunal which their own reason has accepted as an unerring tribunal. If they were obliged to receive the decision without having already been convinced that the decision came from a tribunal that could not err, then they would be slaves; but they have a reason for submitting their reason. There is no possibility of slavery in this case. There is, on the contrary, a consolation for the real dignity of human reason. If there was a church authority that was not unerring, and that church authority obliged some to submit to its decision, then my reason would be degraded. Having come to a certain conviction on a certain point, I will never yield that reason that God gave me, except to the decision of a tribunal which that reason has already accepted as unerring. (Applause.) The man holds the balance in his hand. The scale against the doctrine descends, the other ascends. Now comes a new reason, which he did not know before when he weighed the arguments. A decision has come to him from a tribunal which his reason has accepted as unerring. It is a new argument which he places into the scale that was lightest before. This new argument weighs down that scale; and, bowing his head, he says—his intelligence also bowing—‘*Credo*, I receive it: I believe it.’ My own reason accepts it; I am no slave in this decision.

Page 27–28. I can not lay too much stress on *THOUGHT as a duty* as being the true opposite of authority in religion. To cast away an authority without replacing it with dutiful thinking, nay, to cast it away save by the process of slow and solemn thinking, is vanity or impiety. There is a kind of liberty, or use of liberty, rampant, unreverent, boastful, unloving, which is more hateful, it seems to me, than the most meek sufferance of bondage. Also the liberty that boasts much of itself and hates the authority from which it has come out, is freedom in name,

but in reality is like to have done no better than to have exchanged one bondage for another and a worse. In an article on "Authority in Matters of Opinion," Gladstone says nobly (the italics are mine): "There is something noble in a jealousy of authority, when the intention is to substitute for it a strong persistent course of mental labor. Such labor involves sacrifice, and sacrifice can dignify much error. But unhappily the rejection of authority is too often a cover for indolence as well as wantonness of mind, and the rejection of solid and venerable authority is avenged by lapse into the most ignoble servitudes. Those who think lightly of the testimony of ages, the tradition of their race, which at all events keeps them in communion with it, are often found the slaves of Mr. A. or Mr. B., of their newspaper or of their club. *In a time of much mental movement, men are apt to think it must be right with them, provided only that they move; and they are slow to distinguish between progress and running to and fro.* If it be a glory of the age to have discovered the unsuspected width of the sway of law in external nature, let it crown the exploit by cultivating a severer study, than is commonly in use, of the law weighty beyond all others, the law which fixes, so to speak, the equation of the mind of man in the orbit appointed for the consummation of his destiny."

Page 29. Agassiz, I know not on what authority, is said to have uttered this pithy apothegm: "Whenever a new and startling fact is brought to light in science, people first say, 'It is not true,' then, 'It is contrary to religion,' and lastly, 'Everybody knew it before.'"

Page 93. Religion has taken a great step in these latter days. Hitherto it has been taught that religion was put into man; but now that man has come up into religion. To say the same otherwise, religion was said to have come down from above to enter into man; but now it is seen to grow up with man from under, and to come out of him, being in his heart, as the sight in his eye. Now this is a very great difference, and not

easily measured; for in the old way religion took hold of one man at a time and by himself, being put into him and there an end. It added something to each one alone, whomsoever it entered in. But not being of his nature, nor of all men's nature, what had it to do with all men together or with any one as towards all? Whence, in this elder religion each man stood alone facing the heavens from which the religion came down into him; but men stood not locked together or facing each other in love; nay, nor any man facing himself, for religion was not of himself but somewhat added to him. But by the new way of religion by this great change in it, that now it seems to come out of a man's heart and not to have to be put into it, religion is busy with mankind in three great ways which never it had before: First it treats men all together in a great multitude. Secondly, it treats one man with another, every man with his neighbor. Thirdly, it treats each man alone, facing himself. Surely this is very plain without argument, for whatever belongs to the nature of man and comes forth from him as he grows, must concern men altogether in the whole, and then as related one to one, and then as standing each by himself. Now these are three very great points and have quite made over the whole nature of religion. In other words, the one change in the view of religion, that it is a natural growth in the soul and not a supernatural element from above, changes religion from bondage to freedom, from conflict to fellowship, from formality or dogmatism to character and spiritual beauty.

First, religion busied with all men together can be no less a thing than freedom in religion; for if religion gather men and treat them all together as in one company, this is the same as to treat each equally according to the rights of them all. When all have their rights, each bounding each, none overstepping another and none more privileged than his fellow, this is freedom in act. When each may think for himself, no one nor many nor all together restraining any one in his mind, this is freedom of thought. And with this goes freedom of speech; for if every one may think, who may make his fellow dumb? But the freedom to think needs must be larger freedom than that to act or to speak, and indeed has no bounds at all; for these latter two are like the right of each man in a company to partake of a

well of water or of a store of food, which all own together, and the well or store being begirt and mayhap not large, only a small liberty in it may be the share of each man. But freedom of thinking is like the right to breathe the atmosphere, which each man may draw in by as deep breaths and as much as he will, because it is boundless.

Secondly, if religion be natural to the soul, it unites all men; for fellowship follows what is conceived natural as surely as love follows close relationships like the parental. If religion be simple and natural, it sets every man naturally and religiously alongside his neighbor, who has the same human nature. It is supernaturalism or miraculous claims in religion, the view that it is not natural growth in the heart of man but a special quality or endowment put into mankind from a supernatural source—this it is that causes the wars, persecutions, cruelties, which have raged around religion. For claims based on a miraculous gift to some men, are intolerant and must be so; that is, contrary to fellowship; but participation in what grows by nature in all men is favorable to fellowship and causes considerate and kind action regarding the different measures or forms of it.

Thirdly, if religion spring out of the heart, it needs must concern itself with the state thereof; for it will thrive or not according to what soil it is rooted in. If a plant growing from the soil could think and turn itself and amend the soil if bad, surely it would do so, and in nothing show more care than to look after the earth about its roots. Religion thus can turn itself about; and when it is conceived not as something whole and stiff put into the heart to shape it to itself like clay around a mold, but as growing out of the heart and sucking life therefrom, then it will turn carefully to see what kind of soil it has to feed on. Wherefore this new religion makes a man face himself; which is to say that it brings forward character in religion.

Page 103. That many persons are better in the deeps of them than on the outside they look, having great and sorrowful faults, but still a depth of sincere purity, is the very root-hold of worship. Now this is a very great thing, indeed; for the old



religion being like some finished thing brought to a man's hand, he had done all when he had taken it. Wherefore, what argument hindered that a man might be very high in religion while very low in his life? This was beheld plentifully in earlier Christian ages; for there were many instances of men, high in rank and full of the flush of luxuries and pleasures, who put off baptism or religious-profession to their dying hour or till late in life, in order that they might have freedom and scope to enjoy themselves in sins. Also many very depraved characters were punctual in the forms and doctrines of the church, and were held religious unto salvation. But the new religion, as now it is known, growing up out of a man unfinished, invokes that his character agree with it and be a good root-hold, that it may flourish.

Page 160-161. In *Reminiscences of Froebel*, by Baroness Von Marenholz-Bulow, translated by Mrs. Horace Mann," I find the following good words about enjoyment; nor can they, as I think, be commended too much, nor too much enforced on those who have the care of children; it is sadly overlooked what a lovely and mighty means of moral training, yes, and even moral discipline, pure joy and wholesome pleasure is: "It is a great educational error (which Froebel wishes to combat) to deprive childhood and youth of its legitimate joys; for nature has planted the need and craving for them in their hearts. As bodily development is interrupted and even injured when the lawful wants of nature are not satisfied, the soul and its natural development are cramped if the craving for joy is not met. \* \* \* It is rare that youth who have grown in *happy* childhood rush into any excess of pleasures." The italics are mine, but they indicate the author's obvious stress. The moral and spiritual value of a childhood and early youth well stocked with natural pleasures and made bright and happy, passes words. There follows closely on the above quotations, the following, which is a true, but perhaps not common, view of one moral effect of happiness: "Enjoyment, as a means of unity for men, resembles in its highest and finest expansion true religion, which binds together in the worship of God all ages, all

the different social ranks and all the different grades of culture. Enjoyment delivers from all discension, all enmity, and all separation, during the season of the enjoyment."

Pages 178, 180, 184. The same thought occurs in pp. 258 to 261. In this connection consider the following thought of Froebel (the italics mine), from the "Reminiscences" above mentioned: "Froebel looks on the formation of beautiful objects as the best means of making the soul *susceptible to the ideal* on every side, and the cultivation of *the creative powers* he considers one of the most important means for overcoming coarseness and immorality."

Page 197. Since the writing and printing of this sermon, has appeared W. C. Gannett's admirable discourse on the Bible, printed in the Christian Register of July 23 and July 30, 1891. This discourse is an excellent instance of Mr. Gannett's peculiar lucidness and instructiveness in explanation. A reprint of it in pamphlet form has been called for and doubtless will be furnished. The discourse begins thus: "In the life of a Bible there are three stages. In the first stage it is coming into being as a nation's literature. In the second stage it becomes a divine revelation or its equivalent. In the third stage it becomes literature again, this time part of the world's literature. In the first stage it is simply books; in its second it is the Bible, the sacred book, the 'Holy Scripture;' in its third stage it becomes simply books again. In its first stage it is known to be the words of man; in its second it is thought to be the very word of God; in its third it is recognized again as words of men. The first is the age of its writers; the second, the age of its believers and worshipers; the third, the age of its critics and truest appreciators."

These stages then are treated under the heads "The Old Testament coming into being as Hebrew Literature," and afterwards "Rising into Holy Scripture," "The New Testament coming into being as Christian Literature," and afterwards

“Rising into Holy Scripture,” the “Story of the Bible in the Stage of Bibliolatry,” finally, “The Bible’s Return into Literature,” by means of “Historic Criticism.” An admirable and characteristic summary of the contents of the Bible Mr. Gannett begins thus : “Taking the Old Testament and New together now, five successive strata are found in the Bible: (1) an age of early fragments, which are only known to us as embedded like fossils in the later books; (2) an age of prophetic writing (300 to 500 B. C.), which includes most of the Old Testament histories as well as the prophecies; (3) an age of priestly writing (500 to 200 B. C.), to which we owe most of the national law, as well as most of the Psalms; (4) an age of apocalyptic and speculative writing, from 200 B. C. onward, which has left its vision in such books as Daniel, and its wisdom in some of the Apocrypha; and (5) the New Testament of the Gospel and Epistle, half-Jewish and half-Greek (50 to 175 A. D.). The order of the books as printed in our English Bible is most misleading as a guide to dates. The prophets ranging at the end of the Old Testament, were written in the main before the so-called books of Moses, placed at its beginning; and in the New Testament the chief Epistles antedate the Gospels with which it begins. If one asks, What was probably the first thing written, the lowest thing in all the Bible strata? the answer may be, The Ten Commandments in some simple form, though under these, of course, the early traditions lie. And what is the last, the topmost thing, in all the strata? The Second Epistle of Peter, as we have seen already. And the space of time from first to last is 1,500 years.” After this are discussed the different values of the Bible as Science, History, Morality, Theology, Comfort, Inspiration.

Page 232. I state this view of the week and the Sabbath according to the Dutch scholars in the Bible for Learners. Some authorities say that the week has been widely distributed over the earth from ancient times, and though not known to the early Greeks and Romans, has prevailed among almost all eastern nations from time immemorial; though what may be meant by “immemorial” is not clear. Sayce (Hibbert Lectures

for 1887, on Religion of Ancient Babylonians) avers that the Babylonians had a Sabbath observed ordinarily every seven days and similar to the Hebrew Sabbath; but this is not credited by Robertson Smith in his article on Sabbath in the *Encyc. Brit.*, 9th. ed. But however this, Sayce makes not the Babylonian week the same as the regular and arbitrary seven-day week of the Hebrews, but different, because it depended upon the Lunar month. This being approximately 30 days, the week, and with it the distance between the Sabbaths, must have varied in some manner. The origin and primitive history of the week are very obscure.











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